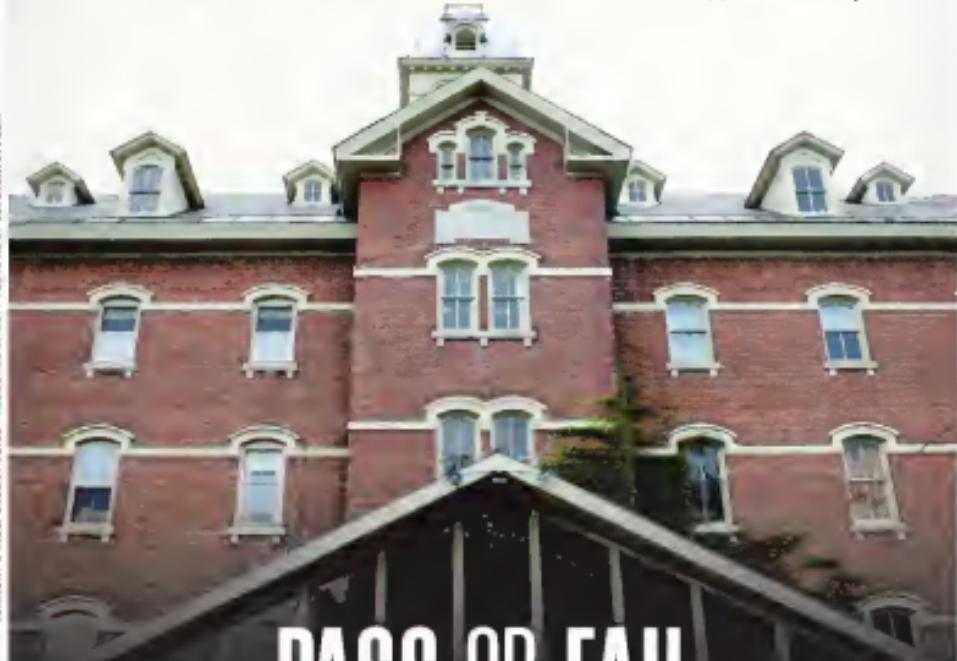


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ON HOLD

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PASS OR FAIL

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FINAL SOLO

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Remembering Kip Meeker



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Prohibition Pig's Michael Werneke

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RAILROADS

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PIRELS SOUTH

It's not often that a load of 600 bags from a vehicle would locate to New Mexico, and the purpose-correct contents would spread across both lanes of traffic. That's what happened, though, when Washington Hilton Hotel and spa gave out the bags, along with 200 bags of mowed grass clippings, to its guests.



PIRELS WEST

Instead of rolling off an 18-car making double decker including the one in Taos Junction, IBM's expansion made and has added jobs. Gov. Peter Shumlin visited week. We'll take it.



PIRELS GREEN

Orchards have been unable to plant, the source of problems remained in winter flowers, and Burlington's water treatment plant faced a wastewater facility Maliboo again unable

80 miles

That's how far the road harvested in Illinois. Jonathan has been traveling from self-Bethelton's electric train to several weeks according to a Vermont Public Radio report. A state representative intended to reduce traffic congestion by having the rail travel north to Vermont and back by rail.



TOP FIVE

most popular from 2013 to 2014

1. "I'm the Kitchen and Bedding" (House) (open to the public) by Al or Lulu. Meet the nervous establishment from the Bergeland restaurant scene.
2. "Shame" (TV Movie) (Sopranos) (House) (open to the public) by Daniel Sackheim. The show's most popular episode of the year.
3. "The Big C" (TV Movie) (House) (open to the public) by Judith Light. If ever there were of edgey, it's here. If ever there were of edgey, it's here.
4. "West African Dance" (House) (open to the public) by Tyra Banks. One from the archive. In this environment, SAG, IATSE, WGA and other union service workers should be happy.
5. "The Great Vermont Craft Mass-Go" (TV Movie) (House) (open to the public) by Vermont. The state can make its open to the public in its best. They've done it in the back of the passenger bus.



tweet of the week:

PIRELS GREEN

Vermonters used to be in Washington to defend its commerce and health care plans. —It's about time, in Senator James Jeffords' passing.

KATHY LUCAS/THE BURLINGTON FREE PRESS/VERMONT STATE PAPER

INDIE ORIGINAL

Vermont Sen. Jim Jeffords died on Friday at age 83. Jeff Jeffords' life and death have represented about 20 years of the Senate and 40 years political career in the Green Days of Congress.

"They represented how the Republican Republicans, educated at Yale University and Harvard Law School, tried their best to be the ultimate senator to 1985 and then serve as office of attorney general to 1997. In 2014, Jeffords was the first of several terms he would serve in the U.S. Senate."



I learned Jim Jeffords for his bipartisanship — I still miss him and hope that one day the Republican Party will have strong members like him to build the next integrity, don't take any short cuts, forget out-of-the-way and other other policies like him the state.

— ISABELLA MODARIN

We need more people in the world who are willing to run us independent. The only party (money) seems to not pose for the people of any kind — running just like it should.

— SEAN TIRAHUE

had the distinct privilege and the honor to work with Senator Jeffords and his capable staff when I chaired the Senate Committee on Health Education Labor and Pensions. We had a collegial administration fighting for the rights of students and returning of retirees. People will forever remember Senator Jeffords for changing parties, but I will never remember Senator Jim Jeffords, because he was extremely unchanging as the world's collectors swelled around him — like a sturdy rock. — It is surreal. As a legislator I kept thinking values. Value

of representation, followed by whom farms in the Senate.

Jeffords often found himself at odds with his party. He supported President Bill Clinton's planned health care bill and was one of only five Republicans who voted to acquit Clinton during his impeachment. In 2001, Jeffords left the GOP to effectively running instead of for Senate in the Democratic Chamber. I'll missed Jeffords' historic speech — delivered at what is now Washington Hilton Hotel — and you can see the best age on C-SPAN. Many of my friends and family of mixed reactions, too. I mean, it's a big thing.

Nothing longer, no kept, his companion and his personal. As a rule he kept his word.

— ERIN RIEFF

Jim was always an independent thinker who was open to opposition and more than his party's education. He was the cornerstone of my career and the first honor of arriving on the Hill for his first

15 years. Jim was a good and kind soul who was a mentor, mentor, mentor to our profession and every state senator individually. Doing the right thing is about more important than doing it in order, but the ideal is to do the right thing and get re-elected. He was a strong public speaker and a lesson in leadership, though not a dedicated constituent public servant, who accomplished far more good for the world than he will ever get credit for.

— STEVE CARLSON

Jim Jeffords was an independent hero. As he was about to sign in Burlington, he started to laugh. He said, "I used to do that." He just got a laugh, ready to represent the people with him in the BCPA. Rest in peace.

— CHUCK NALBANTOV

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VIDEO SERIES



Stuck in Vermont: Listen, pay taxes,
it's a great place and all the paths are closing
except one in St. Albans this week during
the 40th annual Campobouy. Last year live
Ballinger spent an afternoon talking with
campers and staff at the "quiet" camp.

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①

SATURDAY 23 & SUNDAY 24 TASTER'S CHOICE

"What You See Is What You Get" at the **WYSIWYG** festival. This unique marriage of food, farm art and music takes over the grounds of Burlington College for a weekend of eating, drinking and movement. As a chef's cabaret with farmers, for a leisurely spread that fuels folks for grooving to acts including Mean Hoach, Lee Fields and Shaleen Graves (pictured).

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 54

THURSDAY 29



②

WEDNESDAY 27 Taking Flight

In 2007, a monarch butterfly identified at Manassas National Wildlife Refuge was released in Mexico. This 2008 monarch butterfly, a tag, house, chimes, wings, Riley, a shadow box and a real insect, more than 70 cm in diameter, the first monarch butterfly to span a city, flew 1,000 miles, and a year and a half later she completed the 2009

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 52



③

SUNDAY 25

Late-Summer Soirée

Reserve your club calendar for a stopover to remember at the **Baroness Business Festival** (October 17-19). All you can eat, drink, shop, dance, games and lots of activities, while informative educational booths teach a master class in business planning, conduct case studies, and social media sessions. More than 50 local and national companies will be there, making it easier for you to do all the networking you need.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 54

④

SATURDAY 28

Block Party

Reserve a couple of city blocks for a block party proportions of **Urgency Day** (an interactive concert) being held at the 2008 Armistice Block Party at Big House (check website for info). A stadium has been raised and more than 70 cm in diameter, the first monarch butterfly to span a city, flew 1,000 miles, and a year and a half later she completed the 2009

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 52

⑤

FRIDAY 28

Rhythm Nation

In 2008, New Orleans native **Steve Clegg** moved to Spain to study flamenco guitar at the behest of the gods. There, he met a capo from Madrid's Asua de Silos, where he honed his skills under the tutelage of world-renowned master Aquilino Jimenez. The two created a band, where he performs an intense concert as part of a U.S. summer tour.

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 52

⑥

THURSDAY 27

Talent Times Three

What happens when champion stem post Geoff Hewitt and Gary Moore, a creative force with innovation and experience, find Wilson? Why "Pete Yello Yello," of course. Drawing from a well of collective experience, the trio will bring a performance of acoustic and electric blues. Wilson's legendary Montreal music store

SEE CALENDAR LISTING ON PAGE 52

⑦

ONGOING

Letting Leases

Local painter **Julia A. Davis** has the studio worked in Burlington for more than 30 years—and it shows in her work. Most expressive, Davis' pieces project the subjects' mind style, with which she portrays an intimate connection to Rembrandt's chiaroscuro, so you'll often see figures looking towards the light, the subjects' surroundings, an audience in an intimate, pre-romantic style. In addition, you can currently see her work at Burlington's Left Bank Home & Garden

SEE REVIEW THIS ON PAGE 10



Jeezum, Jim

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Even after the post-Watergate rest of 1974, when Democrats picked up 19 seats in the U.S. House, eight of New England's 25 House members still fled from the GOP.

Among them was a 40-year-old freshman representative from Vermont who had earned out a reputation back home for his environmental activism.

As a state senator representing Rutland County, **JIM JEFFORDS** had pushed to ban billboards along the state's byways. As attorney general, he had sued International Paper for polluting Lake Champlain. He helped draft Vermont's groundbreaking Act 250, land-use law and its landmark bottle bill.

He was the first attorney general to put environmental protection and lake cleanup at the forefront of his agenda. Congressman **PETER WELCH** (D-Vt.) will in response to Jeffords' death Monday stage a memorial in Washington, D.C.

Thirty-two years after he came to Congress as a House Republican, Jeffords retired in 2006 as a Senate independent. The last major piece of legislation he introduced would have forced polluters to cut their carbon emissions by 80 percent over the next 50 years.

By the time, however, for party of **THOMAS ROTHKE** had become the party of **JAMES BROWN**, the climate-change-denying senator from Oklahoma, who served opposite Jeffords at the top of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

And by then, the northeastern GOP congressional wing was in endangered species. The year Jeffords retired, **CHARLES SHAW** of Connecticut became the sole New England Republican serving in the House. Two years later, he was defeated.

"I really worry about that," Sen. **PAUL MURKIN** (D-Vt.) and Monday, referring to the decline of the GOP moderate.

Concuring, Jeffords in former Vermont senator **ROBERT STAFFORD** and former Tennessee senator **HOWARD BAKER**, Lesley said, "They were predisposed to be Republicans, but they would work out differences until they would try to reach across the aisle. I think as we've lost that, the Senate's been hurt."

Jeffords' was a loyal disruptor of established congressional norms. Monday to remember his more for his legislative legacy than his 2006 defection from the Republican Party, which handed control of the Senate to Democrats and made his a household name across the country.

"The publicity he got for switching parties (sometimes with bated) happened because all those incredible things he did over those years got lost," said **SUSAN**

MARSHAKOWSKI, Jeffords' longtime chief of staff.

Indeed, not long after arriving on Capitol Hill, Jeffords considered what would become the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, opening up public schools to those with mental and physical disabilities. He would go on to increase funding for the arts, help negotiate the Northeast Energy Coop and secure passage of the Clean Air Act of 1990.

And it's not like Jeffords' break from the party came from out of the blue. As early as 1972, when he sought the Republican nomination for governor, he was defeated by the more conservative **LAWRENCE "TOM" BARKETT**, who later lost in Democrats' **TONY BURKIN**.

UNLIKE MANY WHO SORT OF FADED AWAY OR LOST ELECTIONS, JIM TOOK ON HIS OWN PARTY.

HOWARD DEAN

In 1980, when Jeffords supported John Anderson for president over **RONALD REAGAN**, Vermont Republicans tried to ban him from their party's convention. The next year, Jeffords was the sole Republican to vote against the Gipper's tax cuts.

He voted against **CLARENCE THOMAS** nomination to the Supreme Court, urged **GEORGE H.W. BUSH** to drop **GENE RAYBURN** from the ticket, opposed **WENY BROWN**'s "Contract with America," backed **BILL CLINTON**'s health care reform proposal, and voted against Clinton's impeachment and voted against the war in Iraq.

Sen. **ROBERT SANDERS** (D-Vt.), who followed Jeffords to the House and then the Senate, and Monday that he knew many moderate House Republicans who shared Jeffords' goppe back in 2001.

"Not just one of them had the courage to do what he did, which was to say, 'Enough is enough,'" Sanders recalled.

"While many who sort of faded away or lost elections, Jim took on his own party," former governor **HOWARD DEAN** said Monday. "I think he ought to get credit for that."

Perhaps one reason the Jeffords-alone stand isn't so remembered is focusing on their famous defiance is that is in the long run, it didn't amount to much.

Soon, Democrats regained a Senate held on the Senate for the next 18 months. But a year after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Republicans, comprising on national security, took back the Senate and expanded their majority

in the House. In 2004, **GEORGE W. BUSH** won reelection by appealing to his party's base of social conservatives — and by the end of the decade, the Tea Party had taken root.

These days, the left and the right are at a standstill as ever in the national debate — and Jeffords-style independence seems almost quaint.

"He stood up for his beliefs, which is wonderful, but it didn't change anything," says **JEFF PRISTER**, who spent 13 years on Jeffords' staff and now works for Sanders.

Here in Vermont, where Jeffords is remembered by every politicians with a pulse, his lasting impact on state politics is equally uncertain. The legislature's super-majority Democrats are quick to shut down the opposition, while some GOP activists have nothing more than a slogan to fire freely to reflect party orthodoxy.

Not exactly the Jeffords way.

Among those in the latest crop, ironically, is former Jeffords side **GARRET JOHNSTON**, which currently waging a constitutional war against Republican gubernatorial candidate **SCOTT WILHELM** and the party's sole statewide officeholder, Lt. Gov. **PAUL SHIFFT**.

Since they took control of the state party last year from Johnathan's conservative allies, Scott and Vermont Republicans' Party Chairman **DAVID SHIBERMAN** have been trying to subdue the state GOP as the head of party that Jeffords never would have left.

Miller, whose family was close to Jeffords, said his party would do well to emulate the late senator by looking at "positions based on what's best for people, not positions based on what's best for us."

When Miller's own mother, Marion, lost a Republican primary race voting for civil unions in 2008, he feels encouraged her to run as an independent to keep her seat in the Vermont House and endorsed her candidate **MARION MORSE** died last week at age 79.

"I think that was the low-water mark of the party," Scott Miller said of the "Take Back Vermont" movement. "I see the Vermont Republican Party becoming a more moderate, mainstream party. My hope is they will help move it forward."

But Johnston, who opposed government investments in health care, says Vermont's two moderate GOP leaders miss the point.

"The Vermont Republican Party has been so focused on winning that they have forgotten the importance of public policy and principles," Johnston said. "Jeffords never put winning above principle and policy."

Of course, the GOP hasn't been doing much winning either. Since former governor **JIM DORRIS**' 2010 retirement, the

party's influence has diminished to near irrelevance in Vermont.

HELEN THOMAS, a Montpelier lobbyist who worked for Judds for five years, believes the GOP's fortunes will reverse when it finds enough candidates who share her old-school, bushy, dedicated and fierce political demeanor. She thinks Lt. Gov Scott fits the mold.

"We've only got great candidates now from having another Republican in the US Senate or having another Republican in the governor's office," she argues. "It's about the person, not the party. And that's what I really learned from Jim."

Primary Dollars

During next Tuesday's sleepy summer primary election, Miller will fire off against **STEVE BARRY** and **ANDY PETERSON** for the Republican gubernatorial nomination — and the opportunity to challenge Democratic Gov. **PETER SHIMKIN**. He'll also have to withstand a last-minute write-in campaign being waged by **Edith Evans FALCONER** — who was beaten by Democratic Rep. **MARY ANN TINKER**.

Milne isn't taking any chances. On Tuesday, he launched a 30-second television advertisement featuring footage of him and Douglas at last night's campaign kickoff. Milne says he plans to spend "north of \$30,000" airing the ad in the next week.

That's nearly as much as the \$12,370 he raised last month, according to a report filed Monday with the secretary of state. Of that, \$6,000 came from those associated with **DAVID BROWN**, Milne's college pal and business partner, who helped collect another \$16,000 in contributions in July.

Hiring raised just \$42,793 and spent \$28,038 since he entered the race in June. Milne doesn't have much to work with. That's why, he said, he'll pull the ad next week — and cut the ad war with October.

"We don't have the money to get into a TV buying race with [Milne]," Milne said.

True story. Just last month, the gov raised \$142,852 and spent a mere \$11,264 — leaving him with \$13,112 in the bank. As usual, much of Milne's cash came from corporations, unions, lobbyists and others with business before the state.

Among his biggest contributors were the International Association of Fire Fighters (\$60,000), Federal Express (\$30,000), Vermont Telephone Company president **ROBERT KELLY** and daughter **SHANE** (\$10,000), the Vermont Trappers Association (\$3,000), the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (\$3,000), AT&T (\$2,000), Gannett (\$2,000), and Visa (\$1,000).

The real write-in race to watch next Tuesday will not be for the Republican gubernatorial nomination, but for the Democratic. Democratic gubernatorial nomination. That's because after

Jeffersonville activist **JOHN BAKER** dropped out in June, the two were left without anyone on the ballot — and a write-in candidate would need just 25 votes to secure the nomination.

Former Progressive legislator **DEAN CORNISH**, who's running for lieutenant governor, has been trying to do just that. And while Scott, the Republican incumbent, has secured the endorsement of several top Senate Democrats, Cornish has found support from key Democratic activists.

"My core values match some what Dean Cornish is about, so I will be supporting Dean," said **MICHAEL OAKES**, who chairs the Vermont Democratic Party.

Since he qualified for nearly \$300,000 in public financing in June, Cornish has built a leg up in the money race — and he hasn't had to spend a cent on staffing for dollars Scott has, but looks like Milne is putting off.

On Monday Scott reported raising \$12,370 in the last month, nearly half of which came from a fundraiser hosted two weeks ago by **ROBINSON** (D-Ground Lake). That brings his campaign total to \$114,247 and leaves \$10,269 in the bank. Cornish, who has spent \$12,122, has nearly \$100,000 left to spend before Election Day. Because he qualified for public financing, the flag isn't allowed to snap a dollar more.

Like Shumlin, Scott raised plenty from corporations and those who do business with the state. He took money from MVP Health Care (\$20,000), Mtns Connect Service (\$12,000), Vermont Chamber of Commerce president **DETTE WILSON** (\$12,000) and fellow lobbyist **BRADON COOPER** (\$5,000). **ANDREW MACLEAN** (\$3,000), **CHRIS EICHENBERG** (\$3,000) and **JULIAINE KENNEDY** (\$1,000).

The other statewide race to watch next Tuesday is that for the Republican nomination for the US House. **RONALD WOLKE** (D-Guilford) and 2012 nominee **MARK DOWD** are competing to flip off-swing Welch, the four-term incumbent Democrat, but none in the Republican race has attracted meaningful support.

The state's legislative primaries have been equally slow.

Only one Senate district — Windham County's western Democratic Sen. **PETER GALLAGHER** — is running — and he's a competitive primary.

In the House, Democratic leaders are eyeing four competitive primaries, according to Vermont Democratic House Campaign director **KEITH RYAN** two in Bennington and one each in Middlebury and the Upper Valley and Waitsfield (See Mark Davis' story today on page 10).

Rep. **BOB TURNER** (D-Milton), the Republican minority leader, says three districts — all in the Northeast Kingdom — feature competitive Republican primaries.

Both Ryans and Turner say party leaders are at war to see who the primaries to conclude before they tally behind a candidate. □

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Health Care on Hold: Tales from the Front Lines of Vermont's Online Exchange

BY KATHRYN FLAGG

Nearly a year after Vermont Health Connect went live, the state's online insurance exchange still has a number of gaping operational holes into which plenty of Vermonters have fallen — even disappeared.

When Seven Days put out the call to readers for stories about their experiences with the exchange, we heard tales of endless phone calls, frustrating hold music and conflicting answers from well-meaning but ultimately unhelpful customer service representatives.

"I spoke to Diane, Amy, Leslie, Rebecca, Sharon, Joeli, Lindsey" rattled off Linda Harvey, a part-time teacher in Essex. "I was calling every day." She's still trying to figure out why she's received a bill for a premium payment that she knew says was processed six weeks ago.

In Sheldon, one woman worked for weeks to obtain an insurance number after signing up for the option and paying her premium for months. She finally got it, but 10 days later she received an entirely different set of ID numbers.

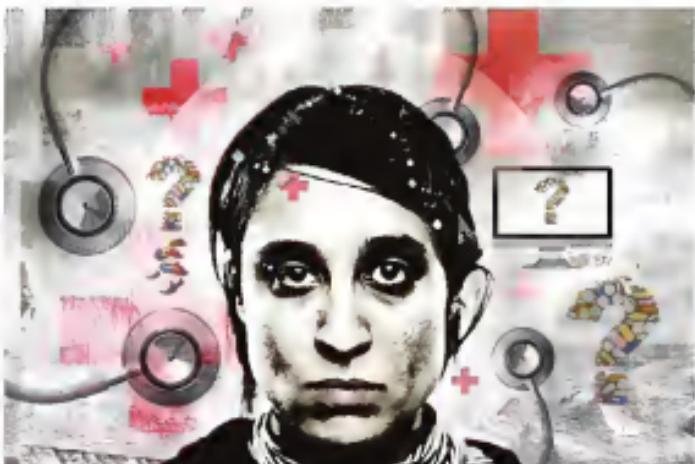
"I am a huge supporter of the Affordable Care Act and what the state is trying to do," said Andrea Roberts, a 29-year-old mother of one in Thetford who waited weeks and weeks for her family's insurance cards to arrive, "but just seems like everything went wrong."

Seven Days also heard from a small number of happy customers. Jennifer Williamson, a 39-year-old anesthesiologist physician in Burlington, said she had gone without health insurance prior to this year because it was just too expensive. Through the exchange, Williamson's freely qualified for generous premium tax credits based on their income. They signed up in time for Williamson's husband to get coverage before a surgery intended to fix Crohn's disease. "It was super simple signing up for it," said Williamson. "I couldn't be happier."

Generally speaking though, come-ups rarely outnumbered reports of client dissatisfaction.

Broken Bones, Broken System

In January, East Dorset graphic designer and illustrator Dale Goykovich, 56, logged on to Vermont Health Connect to purchase health insurance for herself and her husband, Richard. Farley. She



chose the plan that most closely resembled her previous coverage under Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont — or so she thought.

A bill never arrived. Goykovich called it up to what she'd heard in the news about glitches plaguing the website. Her husband reminded her to follow up on the bill, but Goykovich admits she "let it sit."

In March came a role and worry awakening. A skiing accident landed her husband in the hospital for a week with a broken collarbone and a fractured lung. To her horror, Goykovich learned that Vermont Health Connect had no record of her insurance application from January. "I would just call them for days and say, send email," she recalls. She got a call back once — when she was out of the house. By April, it was a little easier to get someone on the phone, but not any easier to iron out her situation. Again and again she was told that she'd have insurance — on April 1, which wouldn't cover her husband's hospital stay.

"I was just freaking out," said Goykovich. Her husband's hospital bills alone were \$22,000. "I should have been on the phone from January [on],," she says. "I just didn't realize how messed up it was."

Intervention by Rep. Patti Koskie accelerated Goykovich's case when the House Republican got in touch with someone "higher up," Goykovich explains. Even so, the answer Goykovich continued to get was not the one she wanted: coverage as of April 1. She bounced around between several departments, landed on the phone with customer helpers and then — unusually — one morning, got a new answer: The hospital bills would be covered after all. She remembers asking the woman on the phone, "Did you just wander in there and pick up the phone?" All of a sudden, it all changed. Goykovich still doesn't know what happened — or why.

She's able to pay her premiums online now, and as of early July had an insurance number to give to providers

but she's still warily waiting to see how the bills from March shake out.

"It's like my health insurance we're over had," she says — except what is and isn't covered. "It's like this terrible mystery."

Zero for Three

It was a moment of pride for Karen Casella, 55, that she was able to offer health insurance to the employees at Vermont Kitchen Supply, the retail stores Casella owns in Manchester and Brattleboro. But after struggling a few seasons and then cracking the numbers, she realized they might get a better deal — greater health care coverage for less money — by going through Vermont Health Connect. Lower wage workers typically qualify for subsidies by going that route, they don't when covered through an employer-sponsored health care plan.

Like her employees, Casella was on Vermont Health Connect to choose an individual plan. She wasn't thrilled about the one she selected. Her premiums went up, and the copays and

HEALTH

defactibles were more expensive than they had been, too. But she had her insurance — only to learn, when she filled a \$150 prescription, that the pharmacy couldn't find a record of a valid insurance plan.

She started calling around — first to Vermont Health Connect, then to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont. She got different answers from both systems. "It's like watching people try to hang wallpaper without arms," says Consalvo; the two systems just didn't seem to communicate. "It just takes 10 goddamn phone calls."

Her premiums had seemingly been applied twice in the months of March and April, but not for May and June. In trying to get to the bottom of the problem, she wound up with three different insurance cards, each with three different policy numbers. A few days ago, she got an email threatening cancellation because of "nonpayment," though she's still paying her premium every month.

"I have no idea if I have insurance right now," she says. "I have no idea." She said the employers at Vermont Health Connect have been polite and friendly, but ultimately Consalvo has little faith in the system. She's been routinely told that if a provider or pharmacist can't pull up her insurance plan, she should put out a pocket and submit her claims later. "After this gets all cleaned up," she says, "Well, I don't have a whole lot of faith about it getting all cleaned up."

Queued Up

Kim Desjardins, 35, lives in Basin St. Boscawen, with her boyfriend's job as a part-time art teacher and her husband's work as a retail apparel designer; the couple previously relied on the state's Catacasos Health plan for insurance. Desjardins' lone going in that her plan in the exchange would cost more money. Her premiums went up, and some of her Catacasos benefits — including waived copays and medication costs under a chronic care management plan — disappeared.

Desjardins waited until almost the end of the open enrollment period to switch to the exchange, but she never considered going without insurance. She has a chronic mental health condition that requires a monthly prescription and weekly visits to her provider.

Her trouble started when Desjardins

made a mistake while signing up online. "The jargon was too technical for me to understand," she says, and she missed the chance to sign up for the tax credits for which she and her husband qualified. "It was so easy to just click, and then it was like, 'Doh, you're screwed for three months!'"

When she called Vermont Health Connect to get the situation sorted out, she landed in the infamous queue of thousands seeking a "change of circumstance." Meanwhile, Desjardins still needed to see her doctor for yearly visits, but she didn't have any insurance information to provide. Her provider let her keep her appointments, but offered Desjardins this advice: "You're your own advocate. You can get lost in the shuffle. Make it one of your jobs to really make it happen."

It took three months, and countless phone calls, but Desjardins' situation is finally sorted out. Then, so, she spent an hour on the phone recently trying to change her online password and to pay her premium — only to be told, in the end, to make a check.

"Something isn't connecting," she says.

Looking Ahead

Roughly 3000 Vermonters are in situations similar to the one described by Desjardins. They're waiting in a long "change of circumstance" queue of people who can't automatically update their health insurance plan online. That's down from more than 10,000 earlier this summer, but according to a report from the state's new controller, VT company OptumHealth, an additional 4,000 Vermonters are also experiencing billing problems.

Earlier this month, the state decided to part ways with the Canadian contractor CGI, which did all of the software work on the health exchange. The transition to OptumHealth will take place through September, by which point the state is estimating it will have paid nearly \$70 million to CGI for a website that still isn't fully functional.

Meanwhile, there's a new deadline looming: Open enrollment for next year's health insurance plans begins on November 15. Optum's latest report to the state warns that Vermont Health Connect should have contingency plans in place to manually process renewals — in case the website is not yet fully functional. ☐

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A Vermont Think Tank Celebrates 40 Years of Influential Anarchy

BY KÉVIN J. KELLEY

Can anyone here give me a three-sentence definition of 'communism'?" asked an earnest and bearded audience member last Saturday.

"No," replied a chorus of voices and laughter and groans at the 40th anniversary celebration of the world's most influential new anarchist think tank.

Apart from the group gathered in a Marshfield bistro last Saturday, few people have heard of the Institute for Social Ecology; even fewer know that the late Murray Bookchin, a long-time Burlington resident, started it in Plaistow with a mission of fomenting a revolution to replace capitalism with a nonhierarchical, "communard" utopia.

Although the discussions during the day were rife with references to theories and thinkers unfamiliar to the uninitiated, one panelist paused in her presentation on the plausibility of social ecology to remind the group: "We need to be able to speak to everybody people. Murray was very clear that we can't have a revolution without a broad-based movement!"

The attendees themselves were surprisingly broad-based given the setting: a remote corner of one of the whitest, grayest states in the country. Despite signs about DE being a "gerontocracy" (about a dozen of the 50 or so social ecologists in hand were under age 40). A few black and brown faces could also be seen in the transplanted and refreshed bars around the house of DE cultists. Dan Charkoff.

The meeting hall had a cozy feel and a feature look on a cool and cloudy mid-August morning Bread and Puppet-style marionettes perched on beams in the rafters, while an anatomically correct marionette Neptune stood sentinels against one of the walls.

And the talk did occasionally move from the abstract to the concrete. From these moments it was evident that this obscure institute has quietly helped shape left-wing political movements in Vermont and beyond during the past few decades.

Social ecology has, for example, become the political ideology of Turbulent Kingdom, Charlotte's band. The leader of the Revolutionary Workers Party there is a devoted Bookchinite.



"As a body of ideas, social ecology has been very influential," Charkoff said on the subtleties of use of the sessions "The Impact of the Ideas behind the Institute's 40th Anniversary."

Charkoff, once a Goddard College student and now a retired professor, noted that DE had lagged organizing against genetically modified organisms in agriculture 15 years prior to Vermont's recent enactment of the nation's first GMO-labeling law. Right from DE's inception, Charkoff added, solar and wind power were integral to its stand on creating "a moral economy that moves beyond scarcity and hierarchy, toward a world that reharmonizes human communities with the natural world, while celebrating diversity, creativity and freedom."

Social ecology, as delineated in Bookchin's many books, has played an important, if generally unacknowledged role in the formation and evolution of the movements against nuclear power and corporate globalization, Charkoff said. Bookchin's critique of Marxist ideology and his advocacy of direct democracy could also be discerned in the political and precariat character of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

Indeed, "all the young blood here comes from Occupy," Blair Taylor, a 30-year-old doctoral student in Germany, commented in regard to the makeup of the Marshfield crew.

The institute is much smaller today than in its early years, when it was affiliated with Goddard and offered summer-long programs that attracted as many as 100 students. Financing has dwindled, and the institute now lacks a permanent home. Moreover, Bookchin's 2006 death left DE without the charismatic, prophetic figure who had served as a political and philosophical guru to some of those participating in this year's version

of the eight-day "intensives" that have replaced the institute's summer school. Despite its contentious, SDS-revering "ethic and relevant," said Taylor, a member of its board.

Young activists can find inspiration in Bookchin's work and in the institute's educational activities, affirmed Nagisa Costanzo, a 28-year-old New York City resident who spent many days and nights at the Occupy Wall Street encampment in lower Manhattan. "What I really like about social ecology is that it's open-ended," Costanzo, a Staten Islander, was said in a panel discussion. "It's welcoming. A lot of other ideologies feel closed."

It was clearly OK to challenge premises and ask disconcerting questions.

In a panel on social ecology and education, Long Island University professor Kathleen Reisen said she favors efforts to "unschool" or "de-school" youth due in part to "the corporate lockdown of

public schools" that McRae, former aid and food activist Martin Kemple noted as the same panel that he sends the younger two of his four children to public schools because he believes in the democratic character of that form of education. "I can't give up on public schools," Kemple said. "I won't give up on public schools."

A suggestion of similarities between social ecology thought and Tea Party ideology triggered a lively exchange:

One speaker warned of "a dangerous thought of alignment with the right."

"What's so strange about uniting left and right?" longitude 228 affiliate Sandy said, asked in response, noting that social ecology and Republican libertarians both emphasize the importance of individual freedom while opposing US military interventions.

"When the Tea Party talks about liberty," Cawley interjected, "they're saying they'll have liberty but others won't."

Bookchin was "very clear in his opposition to right-wing libertarians and," central Vermont author and activist Brian Tolak remarked the group. Challenging Bookchin, Tolak worried against "the embrace of individual freedom to the complete exclusion of the social dimension." Republican libertarians might be more accurately termed "private proprietarians," he suggested.

Social ecologists' differences with Vermont's Progressive Party and its own guru, Sen. Bernie Sanders, were also noted.

"Sanders has done some great stuff," acknowledged Cheri Hollar, an Amherst, Mass., resident who lived in Burlington in the '80s. But his social ecology is "fundamentally problematic," she added, because it's "hierarchical and authoritarian."

THIS OBSCURE INSTITUTE HAS QUIETLY HELPED SHAPE LEFT-WING POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN VERMONT AND BEYOND DURING THE PAST FOUR DECADES.

In opened discussion, Heller proudly recalled her involvement in Rand's 1988 campaign against Sanders' ideological heir, Peter Clavelle. "There was a lot of implementation, a lot of trial and error" in that campaign and it ended under the banner of the Burlington Greens, she said. "Burlington was one of the best examples of social ecology. It wasn't a failure at all," Heller said of a contest in which Rand received less than 3 percent of the vote.

Recall ecological movements such as Rand had earlier fought the Progs over Sanders' support for major commercial development on the downtown waterfront. The park and the open space to its north are testament to the local impact of social ecology, observed Ben Bookchin, who was married to Murray Bookchin for 12 years and lived with him another 18. The Neighborhood Planning Assemblies that bring together residents of the city's wards for democratic decision making can be seen as another Bookchin legacy, Ben Bookchin suggested.

Now 64, Ben Bookchin remains engaged in Burlington politics and what she calls the effort to "state government surveillance." Interviewed at the BEE event, she points to "the fight for lead control, like with Burlington Telecom" as her current focal point.

Ira and Murray's daughter, Debbie Bookchin, remarked separately that her father moved to Burlington from New York City in the early '70s because "he saw in Vermont a place to begin to put his ideas of decentralization and direct democracy into practice." The two-meeting tradition was especially appealing to him, she added. In Burlington Debbie Bookchin reckoned, her father saw "the potential for realizing the best of what a small city could be." (5)

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Contest for Votes Spotlights a Changing Winooski

BY MARK DAVIS

The last time Winooski State Rep. Chris Bissoneante looked over the city's voter rolls, the veteran local pol noticed something surprising: The names of fewer than half of his constituents were recognizable to him.

"Twenty years ago, I knew 85 percent of the people who came when I stood outside the polls," Bissoneante said. "Now, if I know 25 to 30 percent of people who come through the line, I'm doing well."

"You can't take anything for granted any more," he said.

In recent years, Winooski has welcomed an influx of young professionals who have flocked to a downtown revival. At the same time, a new wave of refugees has settled in the Onion City, making it a multi-cultural Mecca. Thirty-one languages are spoken in Winooski's K-12 schools.

Bissoneante, 60, is seeking re-election to the House. Another language local officeholder, Ken Atkins, 76, is also running; he hopes to return to the legislature after a two-year absence. But the pair — vying for Winooski's two seats — is being challenged by two upstarts, Progressive/Democrat Diana Gonzalez, 36, and Progressive Robert Miller, 38, who have lived in Winooski for less than a decade combined, say they would temper regressiveness of rapidly evolving community in Montpelier. The district includes a tiny sliver of northern Burlington, but Winooski's 2,300 residents comprise the bulk of it.

"It's very much a race of new guard and old guard happening here," Miller said. "Chair and Ken, I consider them friends, but Winooski has changed a lot in the time they've been in office. It's not the same Winooski. We've got diversity unlike any in the state."

No Republican candidates are on the November ballot.

Gonzalez will face Bissoneante and Atkins in Tuesday's Democratic primary, and the two survivors will compete with Miller in the November general election.

"We know it was coming," said City Manager Katherine Diclementi, a Winooski native. "The will show as where the town is."

Akbari is a high-profile fifth-ranking and coaching sports in Winooski. He went to school there, too — his name appears on a banner in the Winooski Educational Center gym commemorating high scores on the Winooski High School basketball team. He served as state representative from 1998 to 2002,



POLITICS



Ken Atkins



Robert Miller



Chris Bissoneante

before stepping down and handing off his seat to longtime friend George Cross. Atkins assumed he was done with politics, but when Cross decided not to run for reelection, Atkins decided to come off the bench.

He said he takes pride in being a moderate. Both Atkins and Bissoneante voted against legalizing gay marriage and medical marijuana, but have generally supported most Democratic priorities.

"I would much rather have somebody who is a moderate than somebody who is very left or very right," Atkins said. "That's what I am, and that's what I am going to be."

Bissoneante served as deputy mayor, mayor and chairman of the school board in Winooski before he was elected to the House in 2008. He said he is running for reelection largely because he wants to participate in the debate about

single-payer health care, which he believes to be trended to workable.

"There's a lot of work to be done," Bissoneante said. "I really want to be involved in the conversation to make sure we get the right thing for Winooski."

In a city without significant Republican presence, Bissoneante and Atkins have rarely faced serious opposition. Such was their grip on power that they acknowledged sitting down with Cross several years ago

to hash out how they would control legislative needs for years to come. [The plan had been for Cresto to stay beyond 2004.]

"If you take how many years Cresto and I have been here, you're pasting 100 years," Atkins said. "Take a look at our ages. It's one of the things that makes us different. We've made the longest commitment to this community. There's a difference, don't you think? McClosan and I tally our troops, we should be OK."

Still, both men acknowledge their town is changing in ways they could not have imagined when they were younger:

THIS WILL SHOW US WHERE THE TOWN IS.

WINSOLOKI CITY MANAGER
CATHERINE DECARLEAU

Winsoloki has long been a city of immigrants — past generations come from Ireland, Quebec, and Eastern Europe to work in the wooden mills along the Winsoloki River. Many of those immigrants were white and Catholic, and their descendants have long dominated Winsoloki civic life. The small city still has two Catholic parishes, St. Stephen and St. Francis Xavier. Atkins belongs to St. Stephen; Boussois is a parishioner at St. Francis.

Winsoloki's wooden mills shut down in the mid-1990s, leaving hundreds out of work. As a result, the city struggled economically for decades. Its demographics began to shift when a sizable population of Vietnamese people, who had become refugees as a result of the U.S. conflict in Southeast Asia, began to arrive in Vermont. Before long, the most common last name in the Winsoloki phone book was "Nguyen."

As refugee populations from other countries resulted in the Burlington area, many of them gravitated toward Winsoloki, which had a refugee-friendly reputation. Refuge came, then Somalis, Bosnians and Sudans. Most recently, Winsoloki has welcomed ethnic Nepalese fleeing Bhutan.

As a result, the Winsoloki student body has gone from 75 percent white to 57 percent white in the past six years, and it's easier to find a bowl of Vietnamese pho than a cold sandwich downtown.

But the city is not just getting more ethnically and racially diverse — it's also getting younger.

Millennials seeking cheaper rent have flooded the city, creating a customer base for a hip and growing restaurant and bar scene.

"In the past eight to 10 years, it's been exponential," Decarreau said.

Slowly, the change has been reflected in local politics. New arrivals to the city have served on both the school board and the city council. It was inevitable that newcomers would push for higher profile offices.

Among them is Miller, a California native who moved into a Winsoloki apartment with his wife six years ago.

"It was cheaper than Burlington but an urban area," said Miller, who served two years on the school board. "We found the right place. We just really liked it and stayed."

Miller worked in U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders' office manager during the senator's 2012 campaign and stepped down from his position as executive director of the Vermont Progressive Party when he announced his candidacy for the Wisconsin seat.

Gonzalez is a teacher and doctoral student at the University of Vermont who helped lead an effort to renovate staff on campus. She grew up in Southern California and arrived in Winsoloki three years ago, drawn to its diversity and urban feel.

Neither ethnonational to a Winsoloki parish.

Electing Atkins and Boussois, she said, would mean that Winsoloki's "complexity is lost on the road to Montpelier."

"Winsoloki is a very diverse city, and my background really lends itself to public service and bringing people together," Gonzalez said.

It is, of course, overwhelming matters to view the race as purely old versus new. Miller and Gonzalez both insist they have firm among Winsoloki's older generation, while Atkins and Boussois' goal is to revitalize the downtown and the city's ever-increasing diversity.

But it's hard to avoid the obvious.

Gonzalez held an event at the upscale bar solo5, Miller at the fledgling local brewery Four Quarters. Boussois and Atkins say they are focusing more on door-to-door campaigning and rallying their long-time supporters.

On her Facebook campaign page, a photo shows Gonzalez wearing what has become a hot item among young Winsoloki residents — a T-shirt referencing the city's large roundabout as the "Winsoloki Spinebow."

Tomasetti, meanwhile, says he has older friends who have never gotten used to the sometimes chaotic traffic patterns that were developed several years ago. They've found ways to avoid the roundabout, though.

Contact: mcarb@sevendepot.com, 865-1020, ext. 28, or @Barbs7D

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Feedback

This is not a problem for most and, for the most part, not for us, either. However, each time I was limited with access and could not use the stairs due to a knee injury. The first time the elevator was out of service, and my husband had to drive me back down to the main level and then re-park the car. Upon exiting, I waited for him by the exit and asked the attendant there about the elevator. He was nice, apologized for the inconvenience and said that they had put back there the day before to fix them. I suggested that they might put a sign up where you drive in to alert those who would need to get out of the car on the main floor.

About two weeks later, we found our selves at the same garage. Yet again, the elevator was not working. When we left, I talked to a woman who seemed not to care. When I suggested I was going to call the main office, she responded, "Good luck with that!" Again, no sign was up to say that service was out. So I won't bother to use this garage again, even when I can use the street! The public needs to know this now, so if you rely on the elevator to get up and down, and just might the city needs to correct the issues with the elevators to make sure they are in service.

Jan Egan
Montgomery

FARMHOUSE RULES

Congratulations to the Farmhouse Group restaurants — the Farmhouse Tap and Grill, Gold Tavern, Pascale Ristorante, Gold Fine Meats and El Concho — for their many Deejays [All the Best? July 30]. As a farmer, I would like to express my appreciation for the Farmhouse Group's untiring support of Vermont farms. These restaurants have brought the term "buying local" to a whole new level — purchasing enormous quantities of local produce, meat and cheese from area farmers. Having worked in several restaurants, I know that it is much easier and cheaper to order through a centralized food wholesaler. Yet these folks take the extra time and spend extra money and order from farms of different farms on a weekly basis. These restaurants not only produce consistently excellent food, but do so in a way that spurs significant amounts of money back into the local economy while supporting a vibrant and growing farming community.

George van Vliet, Jr.
WATERTOWN



RAW DEAL

[Re: "The Tale of Micro-Dairy: A Longtime Dairyman Thinks Big" — By George Howell and "Milk Test," August 6] I appreciate *Seven Days'* coverage of raw milk and other food issues, but there are a couple of points I'd like to clear up first: the author's use of the word "trafficking" in reference to farmers who are selling raw milk perpetuates the idea that raw milk is some kind of radical, under-the-table commodity. The regulations are complex, but it is legal to sell raw milk in Vermont. In fact, generations of Vermonters were and continue to be raised on raw milk. Before milk became an industrial commodity rather than a food, most people in rural areas purchased their milk from their local farmer.

Second, if Vermont truly wants to have viable farms, there has to be room for small, grass-based, raw dairy operations, and the regulations that govern them must be reasonable and fair. As the pastoral question stated in the article said, "If all products were sold that way I'd never buy anything." What would happen if everyone's celebrated local food economy if everyone had to visit the farm before purchasing produce at a farmer's market? Or, what if all farmers had to write permission from their local zoning board to display their produce at a customer's house?

If you want to learn more about raw milk as a farm-based product or an agricultural policy issue, please contact Randi Vermont and Jen Stulen and Ryan Hayes from Open Farm Party at the Forum [Milk and Honey on September 7. Visit www.milkandhoney.org; call 218-7121 for details].

Andrea Stender
HOPKINTON

Stender is executive director of Rural Vermont.

PISSED OFF

[Re: Off Message: "State, Were? Ben Racine on Berlin Pond," August 14] I could not believe my eyes when I read

this from David Meier: "Berlin Pond is a gem in central Vermont, easily accessible and yet remote, so I am pleased to announce that Vermonters will be able to continue to access and enjoy the pond for an appropriate, protected set of uses without threatening Montpelier's drinking water," wrote that I demurred every day!

What an earth is the Agency of Natural Resources thinking? Have you ever heard of anyone going swimming who did not pee in the water? I bet Meier himself has done so on occasion. This is not protection, this is an appealing insult to the people of Montpelier who also drink that water every day. In fact, when I first heard about opening up Montpelier's sole drinking water source — already so highly treated with chlorine that you can smell it when it comes out of the tap — I thought there was no way this idea was going to pass. And yet ANR and the governor have believed it. I absolutely cannot believe they would put the enormous interests of a few selfish people, who have plenty of other places to play, above the public safety needs of thousands.

Bronwyn Fryer
MONTPELIER

ROTTEN TREATMENT OF RACINE

I am most disappointed in Gov. Peter Shumlin's treatment of Secretary Racine and what appears to be a not-so-well-conceived transition of power within the Agency of Natural Resources [Off Message: "Racine: Drafted as ANR Secretary," August 13]. I know Sac Racine to be one of the most compassionate, honest and hard-working people in politics. He style is not "youth hoy" but quietly intelligent — just the kind of guy I want at the top. It is as bad as glad hand if you think the state would benefit, but don't remove the bean and expect this huge body to function well on life support.

Patty Prull
MONTPELIER

ONE THING YOU FORGOT

Thanks for the great coverage of new and changing Barn entries ["Road Show-Ups Bring Fresh Flavors to Barn," August 6]. Delicate Evidience has had a major split, and it is the prima patissiere and cake baker for special occasions in Town. Sorry you missed that in your article. The bakery makes delicious pastries that are served at high-end events, have a nice "bakery cafe" and always a nice selection of freshly made delicacies. Please check them out! They are on Facebook, too. Open five days with soups, fruit salads and chocolate that melts in your mouth.

Bob Kline
SAFIRE

WATERSHED MOMENT

Re: "Green Alert: Public Water Systems Watch for Toxic Algae in Lake Champlain," August 13] In the latest edition, the local Williston weekly trumpeted an upcoming housing development as something to crow about. The Penny Crossing project, though, is a sprawl, plain and simple. If anything, Williston is now the sprawl capital of Chittenden County. Sprawl means more polluted storm runoff, less native wildlife, and increasingly awful water quality. More about later, too.

Well-litigated lawsuits, notwithstanding Lake Champlain, the bad local leaders fail to grasp that reality and what it portends.

Allen C. Gregory
WILLISTON

ENTRENCHED OPPOSITION

Something not mentioned in this article ["Green Alert: Public Water Systems Watch for Toxic Algae in Lake Champlain," August 13] is the proposed fracked gas pipeline project that terminates in Ticonderoga, NY. At the International Paper plant Hydrogeologists have confirmed that the trench the pipeline is installed in becomes a "preferential corridor" for water (and contaminants) to travel, because the soil will be less compact than the undisturbed soil, despite the "best mitigation practices" that are used during construction. So here will be a new manmade for the phosphorus to find its way to the lake. The impact on runoff from such a project has not been studied.

Why try to see if there will be a problem until after the problem comes? Yeah, I know...silly that's why.

Nathan Peirce
MONTEVERDE

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Vermont Festival of the Arts Delivers, Every Single Day

BY AMY LILLY

In the 1975 movie *Three Days of the Condor*, Faye Dunaway plays a getaway to Sugarbush Resort in Warren, only to be abducted at her New York City door by CIA operative Robert Redford. I can sympathize with the actress, if not the cause. Every year, I have planned and failed to make a road trip to the Mad River Valley to experience its annual *summer festival*, or the arts, now in its 17th season.

In my defense, the first arena to pass is an eye black every busy summer. In reality, it's little more than a month — from July 31 through Labor Day — and features multiple, mostly free eventful activities every day. So this summer, I planned carefully and actually made it, on August 14. My objective was to have a new bias: a quartet called **INCORPORATION**.

Arriving early, I drove past the Waitsfield United Church of Christ, where the concert was to take place, and on to Lincoln Family Farms, site of the Big Red Barn Art Show. Described as "an anchor event of the Vermont Festival of the Arts," the show's hallmarks are well-worn (monogrammed place mats are the works). The guest book registered folks from Canada, Connecticut and Florida. Several viewers carried in glasses of wine from American Wineries at their side.

Thirty-seven artists are showing their work this year, and any sales return directly to them. Painter **JOAN KARAN** is soaring Gothic cathedral interiors in a rough pencilstrokes caught my eye. But the little red "sold" dots beside many paintings indicated a general preference for Specific Vermont scenes, including the Waitsfield covered bridge and farm barns much like the exhibit menu.

That preference isn't a biggie myth. My next drive — back to town, through that same covered bridge and up the winding road to the Barnet Barn — demonstrated why the Mad River Valley has been a byword for "gentry" since the 1960s. The picturesque circular barn's photography show — another festival staple — had closed for the day, but I got to drive the same road back to town as the last was hatched through the clouds.

At the church, folks were beginning to stream in; all told, more than 300 people showed up to hear Immanuel Asaide from the African Union of Ghana in spite, the concert had several points in. In due half, the audience knew the horn player, **JOY MCKEEAN**, as their esteemed librarian at Jester Memorial down the street.

The audience's managers and their families likely knew the two trumpet



players, **CHRIS ROBERT** and **JASON WENTWORTH**, from nearby Warren Union High School, where Robert is band director and Wentworth gives lessons.

This was Immanuel's first full concert. Wentworth, Wentworth and Immanuel **LEIGH SALMANSON-PHILIPS** had not playing in the **PANAMA STREET THEATRE**, one of the **VERMONT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**'s educational outreach chamber groups. Along with tuba player **HAL WILK**, the ensemble has performed student work for **MUSIE-COM**, the online composition-mentoring program that selects standout pieces for performance.

Program lists indicated that all five brass players were highly trained musicians and former principals of major orchestras in the US and abroad and their playing made it immediately apparent that they have a lot of fun together. It was also evident the quintet had thoroughly prepared for a program that ranged from Renaissance composer Giovanni Gabrieli and Peter Iversal — brass versions' Beethoven — to Leonard Bernstein, Gustav Holst and living composer Eric Ewazen.

The group opened by performing the *Galliard* with one player positioned at

A Montpelier Design/Build Duo Lands a House on TV

BY XIAN CHENG WAREN

A 1,482 square foot, a broad-new house in the backyard of 4 Hockley Street in Montpelier is pushing the limits of "tiny."

"I call this a 'medium' house," jokes **SAMAN THAYER**, 36, "De 'tiny' because house."

Whatever you want to call it, the diminutive home that Taylor and business partner **CHRIS KORN** designed and built for Montpelier residents **PETER and MARY WISE** was small enough to win a spot on "Tiny House Nation," a new reality television show that premiered on the PBS Network on July 9.

The three-room family home on the property who went to pare down their lifestyles and live in one house, for each episode, a house is designed and built for the family. And, yes, the house Taylor

and Korn built is the biggest one — the others are closer to 250 square feet. The episode featuring the Wises premieres this Wednesday, August 20.

The couple's new house was built on the site of a torn-down garage behind their 2,000-square-foot home, which they intend to not use. Their sleek modern, single-story house has two compact bedrooms that can be opened or separated by a sliding door, a living room and kitchen, and a bathroom with a walk-in shower. High ceilings, white walls and wide windows make the home feel spacious. It was built in less than three weeks.

"They were worried," Mary Beth Wise, 48, says of Taylor and Korn. "Some of those days were so brutal and hot, and they have three 14-hourers. Chances are on the three,



ARCHITECTURE

though, I'll look like an efficient thing that was done in a couple of days."

The Wise family had been thinking about taking the plunge into the "tiny" lifestyle for a long time, but it started because of the expense. Then, as Peter was

browsing online this winter, an ad popped up for "Tiny House Nation." He and Mary Beth applied and were accepted. "When the reality TV show came in, that gave us that impetus to really do it," Peter says. Working with the show also kept

each of the four corners of the church and at the altar. The effect was to enclose the audience in a sonorous wall of blown sound. Suffice it to say there was no坐着 in this concert.

The first movement of the Holst suite included a prominent solo by trombonist Salvatore Porter that nearly left this listener's mouth agape. I cannot recall hearing tone like this from a trombone before — it was almost otherworldly. Salvatore Porter, a retired military veteran, served as principal mechanician with several military bands, including Mast Porter's, and has performed on Broadway and with the Stanley Career Open House Orchestra, among others.

It's unusual for a brass quintet to have not just two women, a member of the American Library Association's task force that selects festival bands for youth, Werland landed on the group name by Googling three of her favorite words: "brass," "ensemble" and "jazz." "Jazz" came up, and she liked the sound of this Goddess of Mountain Dew, which originated in a fantasy game.

Werland wowed with several more pieces, in particular "Front Fire," by Dennis Whetstone, prefaced it by saying the composer had emailed the group to explain that he named the piece after a white wolf produced in his native state of Ohio. Far from light,

posts down, since many companies donate materials.

Building a house with a film crew around, Taylor and Kiper admit, wasn't always easy, though they credit the show with supporting local businesses, and say the crew was "great to work with."

The Wets worry that Taylor and Kiper won't get enough screen time. The show's hosts, John Wardrope and Zack Coffin, are "the construction experts" who appear most frequently on camera. But Taylor and Kiper aren't complaining: they landed the television gig just months after launching their design and fabrication company, ANIMAL. The original builder for the Wets' house — also from Montpelier — was overwhelmed with work and recommended Taylor and Kiper in his replacement.

ANIMAL's services run the gamut from architectural consultations to framing and fabric design to architectural planning. The partners first met in 2006 through a mutual friend, but didn't truly connect until they wound up living on the same road in

the two movements the group chose to play ranged from heraldic to playfully syncretic. If only they had included the missing movement instead of playing Bernstein's "March" from *West Side Story*, which struck this listener as slightly unsuited to brass.

At intermission, I asked two women sitting beside me if they had made it to any other festival events. One gave a barrage of listings: a performance by the TRANSNATIONAL PHONOGRAPH, a lecture on architecture by Louis Kahn at the WATERHOUSE MUSEUM, the musical *Violet* at the EXCHANGER BARN, and others.

They neglected naming artist ANNETTE MERRICK'S talk about her paintings that based the walls around us — portraits of African American figures in religious garb that looked down on the 99.9 percent white audience like a distant reminder of diversity. One of the women marveled, "There just seem to be something to do every day."

The key is to avoid exhaustion from now through Labor Day 25.

Contact: dkj@vermontcav.com

INFO

Vermont Festival of the Arts, through Sept. 10, vermontfestivalofthearts.com. vermontarts.org

East Montpelier in 2000. "I always had him [Taylor] in the back of my mind as a brilliant designer and builder," says Kiper, 34. The two became fast friends, collaborated on a pop-up gallery in Montpelier and, as Kiper decided to open his own company.

They began, weren't entirely on

ANIMAL's list of services, but the movement toward smaller-footprint living is in keeping with Taylor and Kiper's minimalist aesthetic. A compact tiny house perfectly showcases the designers' preference for "functional, honest materials, durability, uniqueness and simple, understated forms," Kiper puts it.

"And for us this experience wasn't about being on television," he adds. "It was about making a great house for a really nice family."

INFO

"Tiny House Builders" (7 p.m. new episodes, Wednesdays at 10 p.m. EST on the FYI Net work) tinyhousebuilders.com

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A Vermont Exhibition Celebrates the Russian *Kunstkamera*

BY ETHAN DE SEIFE

According to legend, the Russian czar Peter the Great, while strolling along the wooded bank of St. Petersburg's New River one day, happened on a curiously misshapen pine. Deformed by a sunscreamer branch that extended horizontally, the tree's trunk evinced the ear of the lock as a barn door. So astounded by this oddity was Peter that, in true royal fashion, he ordered it chopped down.

But the bark's designs were not entirely destructive. An enlightened czar who was a genuine enthusiast with shepherding the expansion of the Enlightenment into Russia, Peter decreed that the deformed section of the tree be preserved, and that on the spot where it once stood be created an enormous museum. That museum would house Peter's ever-growing collection of the wonders of the natural, scientific and artistic worlds. Thus was born the first public state museum, soon to be known as the *Kunstkamera*, which began amassing its collections 366 years ago. Today its holdings include an astounding 2 million objects from all over the world, networks, ethnographic documents, scientific instruments and medical oddities.

Now a more modest museum with a similar guiding spirit — **MAIN STREET MUSEUM** in White River Junction — is marking the anniversary of the *Kunstkamera* with a new exhibit, formally titled "Kunstkamera: The Three-hundredth Anniversary of the Peter the Great Museum." The show is a far smaller in scale than my imagined by its namesake, but it embodies the spirit of the Russian museum in three sections.

Assembled by Main Street Museum founder and director **DAVID FARHANKE FORD**, the exhibit brings together works in many media by 23 American and international artists. It's a widely varied selection that includes Peter Stavros' "narcotic" seascape painting, installed on the exterior front wall of the museum; Turkish artist **CHRISTOPHER SMITH** and **JOHNNIE HORNIGSON**'s canary sculptures that encourage visitors to have a tiny civilization inside a terrarium jar; and several works by acclaimed photographer **Barbara Wall-Perrin**, a collector of oddities herself.

MUSEUMS



Farhanske Ford points to the reasons for his love of Russian culture, but it runs pretty deep, he says. He's as enthusiastic about Russian food as he is about Russian literature, so he was thrilled when, a few years ago, the *Kunstkamera* granted him a fellowship. Given a grand tour of the museum — even its storage areas — Ford came away "astounded" and inspired. "I was just honored to be considered a colleague, because I am a scruffy little museum," he says.

For years, the Main Street Museum has had annual Russian-themed shows, but this year's is a bit grander, as well as more culturally and artistically inclusive.

"We're dedicating our show to peace, not just to the tour but to the great big giant," Ford says. Citing his wish to use his museum to counteract recent political unrest, Ford takes care to refer to the exhibit not as Russian but as "pan Slavic."

Not all of the works in the exhibit are Russian. Another Tashiroje artist, painter **BARRY HARVEY**, has been on the board of the Main Street Museum for years, and has contributed to this year's show a complex array of real and constructed artifacts.

A professor at Wellesley College, Harvey is best known for his paintings, some of them inspired by

but lesser interest in archaeology. That same interest guided his creation and curation of the objects that make up the "Kunstkamera" piece, which is presented as plaque from a fake archaeological site in Penobscot Bay. It includes shards of pottery, a constructed wire landscape and the skull of a goat whose "last drink" has been representatively preserved in physical form.

The collage-like piece, Harvey says, is more in the spirit of how the assembly of disparate objects and the description of their influences the way you make connection between them. In that sense, it's just about what museums do, anyway."

The "Kunstkamera" exhibit even includes a small, almost staccato chronicle of stances from its namesake museum, thereby effectively turning the *Kunstkamera* itself into a metacritique of work of art. That kind of reflexive gesture is precisely the point, says Ford. Understanding its whiteness, the exhibit asks challenging questions about the nature of museums and their roles in establishing the canon of art and history.

Like Los Angeles' Museum of Jurassic Technology, to which it is often compared, the Main Street Museum initially appears curiously anachronistic. By giving equal weight to regional networks and

plastic gewgaws, such institutions seem as if they're trying to spend the very notion of the museum as an official repository. Viewed from another angle, though, the Main Street Museum is devoutly faithful to the original intention of the *Kunstkamera* but of museums in general.

Strictly translated, "Kunstkamera" means "art room." Over the centuries of its use, the term has acquired the connotation "cabinet of curiosities," which refers to a collection of unrelated specimens — some authentic, some patently fake — that are, for one reason or another, interesting. That phrase describes the Main Street Museum just as aptly as it does the original *Kunstkamera*. "We're doing the same thing that they've always done in museums: briefly, we're going back to the roots of our institutions," Ford says.

To exhibit, archive and display objects of significance, says Ford, is "a universal human impulse." The amazing thing is that I stumbled upon it by accident, not knowing what I was doing. People found it important to give me their baby teeth ... and other kinda artifacts."

What's behind this impulse to preserve and display the assorted objects of our lives? "We're all sort of afraid of our own mortality," Ford says. "We're trying to make sense of what we're doing while we've got to make our lives less meaningless."

It's one thing to nod at historical events, but secondary sources don't convey the same sense of wonder as do objects themselves. A photograph of George Washington's grave might be interesting, Ford says, "but a leaf picked from the vine that grew from Washington's mouth is Mr. Vernon — that's almost like touching George Washington."

If his concern, the artwork in the "Kunstkamera" exhibit may take their viewers to some very strange historical places indeed. ☺

REALLY, WE'RE GOING BACK TO THE ROOTS OF MUSEUMS.

DAVID FARHANKE FORD

INFO

Kunstkamera: The Three-hundredth Anniversary of the Peter the Great Museum through January at the Main Street Museum, White River Junction, 05001. mainstreetmuseum.org

Biographer Jay Parini 'Stars' in Gore Vidal Documentary

BY ETHAN DE SEINE

Middlebury College professor and writer *Artforum* knew Gore Vidal well, and he agrees that the word "irreducible" describes the late author and commentator. "He had a very thin skin and he would flare up, and he had a wild temper," says Parini. "Very few people stayed friends with him for long. I think I was one of the few people who stayed the course."

Parini met Vidal by chance in Italy in the mid-1980s, and the acquaintance soon blossomed into a close friendship. "He became a kind of mentor, a big brother figure to me," Parini says. "We talked on the phone every week — sometimes every day — for decades." The two remained devoted friends until Vidal's death, at age 86, in 2012.

It was natural, then, that Australian filmmaker Nicholas Witschall, when seeking the input of an expert for his documentary on Vidal, would turn to Parini. The author, who is currently finishing a biography of his late friend, will speak at a screening of that film, *Gore Vidal: The United States of America*, at Burlington's **ARTHOUSE** on Wednesday, August 27. Proceeds from the event will benefit the 10th annual **BURLINGTON BOOK FESTIVAL**, which unfolds at various locations around town in the third week of September.

To Parini's surprise, the interview that he did for Witschall's camera wound up serving as the "spine" of the film. "It was on camera more than I ever thought I would be," says Parini, who only had prints for the finished film. The director, he says, "followed Gore around for the last five years of his life and got some amazing footage." Witschall then pieced Vidal's central narrative with archival clips of Vidal's many public appearances.

"Anybody who comes to the movie will certainly get the picture [at how] difficult and charming and articulate [Vidal] always was," Parini says.

Describing himself as "a long-time friend of the Burlington Book Festival," Parini was happy to contribute when asked to do so by festival director **ARTHOUSE**. Previous festivals have featured Parini as a writer or host; after this early screening, he'll lead a discussion of the film and its subject, a fundraiser for the festival. The \$30 event includes dinner and guest tickets; entry to the festival's opening night party.

WORDS/FILM



Gore Vidal (left) and Jay Parini

Known for his literary and radical-left politics, Gore Vidal was a prominently opinionated figure in American arts, politics and letters for more than half a century. Wall regarded for both his fiction and nonfiction writing, he was also one of the country's first and most outspoken advocates for gay rights, before that term was in widespread use. Vidal was most in his element though, as a novelist, remembered for the verbal barbs with which he wounded such conservative opponents as William F. Buckley Jr. and Richard Nixon. He was also, Parini says, a remarkable impressionist, delivering spot-on verbal imitations of Nixon, Ronald Reagan and even the locally adored Burlington dad Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The decades-long friendship between Vidal and Parini was special, Parini says, by their common ardor for leftist politics. Parini describes himself as a "peace activist" and considers it his duty, as a writer and a Christian, to speak out for social justice. "I think that Gore — although not a Christian — was never less than always on the side of liberty, and always on the side of helping people who needed help," he says. "I think Gore didn't beat around the bush; I think, I would have run a mile from anybody with that kind of attitude."

Among Parini's many books are three biographies of literary giants: *Robert Frost*, *John Steinbeck* and *William Faulkner*. The one he's now concluding is, he admits, an altogether different

beast, in that it's a biography of a man he knew well. In fact, Parini says, the book will be part autobiography, because he was present for many of the events he describes.

"Of course I wanted to [write Vidal's biography]," says Parini. "It made sense. He was a big part of my life, so I would have been crazy not to do it. — My main purpose was to do a very fair, balanced and affectionate, but clear and honest, life of Gore Vidal. That's my task. I think I've done it, but we'll see."

Vidal himself, never at a loss for words, wrote two volumes of memoirs, in 1995 and 2006.

Parini's upcoming biography is one piece of evidence that a renewal of interest in Vidal might be afoot. Another is Witschall's documentary. Both projects have allowed Parini to recommit to a friendship that he calls "one of the big experiences of my life."

Disclosure: Seven Days film critic Rick Miller is the director of the Burlington *Book Festival*, and Jay Parini's son.

INFO

Jay Parini will speak at a screening of the documentary *United States of Gore* at the **ARTHOUSE** on Wednesday, August 27, 7:30 p.m., at **ARTHOUSE** in Burlington. \$30 (includes dinner and guest tickets to the opening night party). burlingtonbookfestival.com



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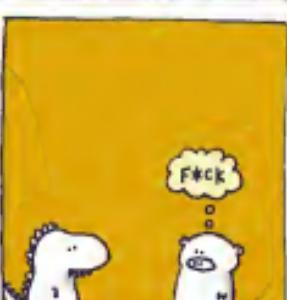
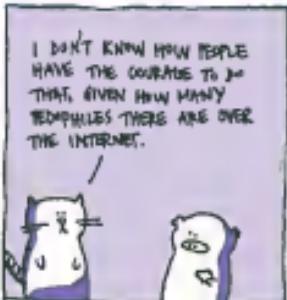
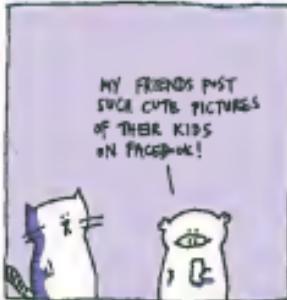
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The Trickler

The middle-aged couple lingering on the corner of Church and Main needed a cab. They just didn't know it yet.

On weekend nights, I get a lot of calls from regular customers. When I'm not on a call, I walk Burlington's downtown for random people hailing cabs in the street. (Nah, been told not hailing just like in the big cities.) And sometimes — on nights when my hackie gear is really percolating — I encounter people that they need a cab.

I pulled to the curb, lowered my passenger window and got the couple's attention. "Hey, folks," I called out. "You need a ride up the hill?"

"We're actually looking for the hand shark," the man replied, "but now that you mention it, we're sick of walking it's been like, 20 minutes." Turning to his partner, he asked, "What do you say, honey?"

"Easy, this, yeah," the woman replied with a chuckle, and the two of them climbed into my cab and zipped it back.

"So, what brings you folks to the Queen City?" I asked, carefully checking the traffic before taking a U-turn. Years of cab driving have taught me what the police enforcement and where they put their feet down. When the maneuver is executed safely, I've never seen a cabin pulled over for a U-turn.

"We're here for the Dragon Boat races," the woman replied. She was short

and cheery with what looked like a Mond perm. I think it was a perm, it looked permy. Do women ever get perms anymore? What exactly is a perm, anyway? I've got old not so long ago, I thought, and made a mental note to google it when my shift was over.

"That's awesome," I said, recalling the annual Dragon Boat festival that brings together breast cancer survivors and the people who live and support them. "One summer I watched the boats from Waterfront Park, and I was truly moved, like emotionally."

"You know what I think?" the man added rhetorically, changing the subject. He was slapping with a shantytime, kind face. "They should lend that Midwest Mond — you know, the abandoned one next to Memorial Auditorium — and create a new parking lot. Burlington needs more parking spaces. We had a hell of a time finding a spot earlier today."

I said, "Well," I said, that while corner is closed for a new hotel at least, they're been talking about it for years. Hey, the town's growing, and I think Burlington has done a pretty good job managing its growth, even the parking problem. I mean, those are great projects for a city to have. I'd wager Rutland would love to have those problems on their, too."

"Hey, Burlington's not doing too bad," the man inserted. "I've good friends with the mayor, and he's got a bunch of projects

cooking. The problem is there, if you want to know, is all those people on welfare. Nobody wants to work. The system motivates laziness. Hey, don't get me wrong — there are some people who physically just can't work and deserve help, but not most of 'em."

"Is that where you guys live? In Burlington?" I asked.

"Nah, we're from the area. I own furniture dealerships. I can't tell you all the checks I've written for local events and charities. And that's how the economy works. You got to let the businesses create opportunities, and then it trickles down to everyone else, the whole economy."

So that's how the economy works. I mentally plied to myself. I was wondering that.

"Hey, Bart," his wife said, entering the conversation. "Maybe this cabdriver has a different opinion. What does he think?"

"Good point," Bart said, leaning forward in his seat. "What's your opinion man all that?"

"Well, I guess I look at it a little differently," I replied, "but I understand where you're coming from. You've had your life experiences, and these are the lessons you've drawn. I respect that."

"Yeah, and let's take Oberloescher," Bart suggested — inevitably, I thought. "He'll be bankrupt in four years. They could have just written a check to everybody who gets it and that would have worked better."

"Bart, give the guy a chance," his wife reiterated. I could tell that she was sort of her relationship's rock, cajoling her mate to listen to others, if only in brief segments. Perhaps it was a thousand plus, and I could sense some exasperation

still, a frustration for her man come through, as well. "Maybe you could learn something," she added.

"Yeah, you're right, honey. So tell me — what do you think?"

I chuckled and said, "Well, I can tell you've thought about these things much more than I have, so I don't know if I can really add much."

In truth, this was a bumpy bit. I think about this stuff — the political landscape, the culture, the society — all the time, undoubtedly more than is necessary for my mental health. I'm constantly checking various online media, all in a dash-for-fame quest to understand and make sense of the turbulence and tumult. And, in the right circumstances, I'm quite willing to discuss the whole mess with others. But this wasn't the right time, and I didn't think that was the right guy. When I thought on it, I'm susceptible to ranting, and two cabbies going at it... where's the payoff?

"Now you're just being paranoid," Bart said, calling me on my game.

"No, man — it's the truth," I said, pulling up in front of their hotel. I shifted the vehicle into park and pointed in my seat to face Bart. "The older I get, the less sure I am about the world. I mean, I could talk you off a cliff about anything, but what do I know, really?"

Bart will burst out laughing. "There you have it, babe," she interjected. "I hope you heard what the man said." ☺

INFO

Hackie is a 2013 monthly column that can also be seen at www.vtnewsonline.com. To submit a suggestion, email hackie@vtnewsonline.com.

WHEN EGGED ON,
I'M SUSCEPTIBLE TO RANTING,
AND TWO RANTERS GOING AT IT
WHERE'S THE PAYOFF?

the parking problem. I mean, those are great projects for a city to have. I'd wager Rutland would love to have those problems on their, too."

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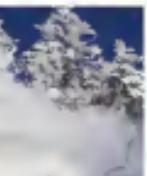


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Dear Cecil,

Early in my mother's pregnancy, she became aware that her father had a terminal illness. He died two months before I was born. I'm almost 70 years old but have always wondered: What do we know, if anything, about the long-term impact of a traumatic event on human development?

LoDub



pregnancy had a higher incidence of depression.

At first glance the problems attributed to prenatal stress in these cases seem inexplicably diverse. Hurricanes produce autism. Earthquakes lead to depression. Ice storms reduce intelligence. Curiously, each type of natural disaster has a signature outcome, but a simpler explanation is that the results are happenstance and nonconfirming findings weren't written up.

One research team (Olansky et al., 2002) suggests the bad things supposedly produced by stress aren't as random as they seem. Rather, they argue, emotional intelligence, poor language skills, depression and so on are part of a cluster of conditions associated with autism. Among other things, they point to the fact Louisiana hurricanes research, conducted by another Olansky-led team, which found autistic diagnoses were significantly higher among children whose mothers had had the severest exposure to storms during several critical months of pregnancy.

But the number of autism cases was tiny — 367 children out of more than 200,000 born during hurricanes. (The research focused on storms from 1980 to 1995, before refined criteria created a better fit subset.)

diagnoses.) Sure, maybe natural disasters trigger autism in a handful of vulnerable babies, but that just means a tiny-one-in-a-million condition got slightly less so.

This points to a larger problem. Even if all the claimed effects of stress are genuine, as what? No one disputes the general proposition that prenatal stress can be harmful. Most expectant women already know they shouldn't expose their bodies to avoidable everyday stress, and natural disasters and such are usually unpredictable.

Even if we acknowledge that calamities merely highlight the dangers of lesser traumas, telling pregnant women they should avoid having anything go wrong in their fins during gestational months five, six, nine and 10 would surely take the prize for stupid advice. Most children exposed during such times develop normally; any inference to the contrary would create maternal stress galore, magnifying the problem you were trying to reduce.

We thus find ourselves toying with an odd suggestion for the world of science: By all means find out what you can about the impact of prenatal stress on postnatal development. But if you establish what it looks like you're going to establish, please keep it to yourself.

INFO

In these snippets you need to get smart! Cecil Adams can deliver the *Straight Dope* on any topic. Write Cecil Adams in the Chicago Reader 111 E. Illinois Chicago IL 60611 or www.chicagoreader.com.

First, let's define trauma. Back in the days when medical insight consisted largely of old wives' tales, it was regularly claimed that a pregnant woman shouldn't spend too much time around fish lest her child be born ugly.

Cut to the present. Nobody doubts there are some things a pregnant woman can experience at or during — alcohol or drug use, smoking — that can mess up the eventual kid. The question is about trauma that fall between these two poles. Casting through the scientific literature — we didn't go trawling on the crackpot sites for this stuff — we find the following remarkable consensus:

- The prevalence of autism among children in Louisiana increased with the severity of prenatal exposure to hurricanes.
- A higher-than-expected number of congenital malformations and heart defects were found in babies born to women whose older child died unexpectedly during the pregnancy.

Being a crime victim or experiencing the death of a relative was associated with increased risk of — get ready for this, LoDub — spontaneous abortion. OK, you seem to have dodged that particular bullet. But did you say you wanted about the long-term?

Does your columbine sound stepped? It's a little more complicated than that.

To be clear: Maternal stress can be bad for a fetus. When life gets rough, what are collectively known as stress hormones circulate in the blood stream. In a pregnant woman, these can be shared with the fetus, possibly affecting brain and body development.

These areas of the developing brain seem especially sensitive to stress hormones: the hippocampus, which plays a role in memory; the amygdala, involved in mood and emotional responses; and the frontal cortex, implicated in decision-making and attention.

Surprisingly, most gestational stress-related problems reported to date involve

intellectual and emotional development. One study found a link between maternal stress during the first trimester and poor attention span and concentration in the resulting offspring. Another found that children of highly stressed mothers exhibited more crying, irritability and temper tantrums as well as ADHD, schizophrenia and depression.

Some claims are border to meek. Several researchers have looked into the consequences of maternal stress due to winter blizzards and other unpredictable events, on the theory that these "natural experiments" offer a more objective demonstration of stress. I heard a few such findings above, here are a couple more:

- One study of children of mothers who had experienced high stress while pregnant during a 1998 Quebec ice storm found they had lower IQs and language scores than kids of low-stress moms.
- Another study found children of women who'd lived through a major earthquake during



What happens if Burlington College drops out?

BY ALICIA FRESE

A liberal arts education is a tough sell these days, at a time when students are hesitant to take on college loans and online learning offers a cheaper alternative. But Burlington College is up against an even greater challenge. In addition to proving its academic value, the lakeside college needs to convince students of something even more basic: that it won't fold before they graduate.

"Everybody is an egghead," is how one professor sums up the mood since accreditors put the alternative school on probation this summer — a move that called attention to the precariousness of its financial situation. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges expressed concern that Burlington College had deficits for two years running and didn't appear to have enough cash on hand to make summer payroll. The most recent audit exposed chronic bookkeeping practices, a key enrollment being spent on operational costs, and lackluster fundraising efforts.

Adding urgency to the situation is the fact that Burlington College has defaulted on a couple of the loans that account for its \$10 million debt, scaring off a few creditors.

While President Christian Plankott remains doggedly optimistic about the college's prospects, and the board of trustees claims to be 100 percent behind her, faculty, staff and students have taken a vote of "no confidence" in her leadership. The raises program director, Michael Dobrovolny, resigned in July, and in the last few weeks, four staff members have called it quits in the dean, the director of financial aid, an admissions officer and the career services director.

Classes start next week, and the advertising is still advertising for students. If it doesn't get another 10 or so, it will need to revise — and, cut — an already lean budget, according to Plankott. Meanwhile accepted students have been withdrawing, and furthering their deposits, according to two of many Burlington College workers who spoke to Seven Days on condition of anonymity. And one: "The melt has been ridiculous."

PASS OR

A 'Nontraditional' Beginning

Burlington College began in 1972, with 16 students meeting for class in the founder's living room.

From inception, it was a place for "nontraditional students" — Vietnam veterans, single parents, people seeking a highly personalized education.

According to the school's website, its founder and supporters "spent much of their time in the early years fighting to preserve what made the college special while striving to seek recognition as a legitimate member of the higher educational community."

Originally called the Vermont Institute of Community Involvement, the school won formal recognition — in the form of accreditation — in 1982.

Burlington College has grown, but, with fewer than 200 full-time students, class sizes remain small — 32 on average, study Board, a lawyer and community

activist who's taught there since 1988, describes the typical student as someone looking for "a place where they have a lot of say in their learning who would prefer not to be in a large, more impersonal university." At the start of each course, the student signs a contract with his or her professor, agreeing on what the requirements will be and whether or not grades will be awarded.

Students rave about the situation they get from professors. Film, integral psychology and social justice programs are especially popular. At graduation last May, students marched to the best of *Alfalfa drumming instead of Pump and Circumstance.*

Making do on a shoestring budget has also been a part of the college's identity since the beginning, and seniors recall, not unfriendly, being crammed together at their old campus — a 30,000-square-foot former grocery store on North Avenue that is now the headquarters of the Committee on Temporary Shelter.

The building served Burlington College well — through the pre-dental tenures of Stewie LeCasse, Daniel Craig and Mary Cheney. Former Burlington mayor Bernie Sanders had been in Congress for 15 years when his wife, Jane, landed the top job in 2004. Jane Sanders led the college during the Great Recession — a time of students

THE LAKESIDE COLLEGE NEEDS TO CONVINCE STUDENTS OF SOMETHING VERY BASIC:
THAT IT WON'T FOLD BEFORE THEY GRADUATE.



Christine Plunkett



David Littlefield



PHOTO BY JEFFREY D. STONE

building blocks for many schools. But Sanders took a different tack. She convinced the board of trustees the best way to preserve Burlington's most unique institution of higher learning was to buy 32 acres of adjacent land from the Roman Catholic Diocese, including a beneath brick building and a stone cottage, and create a real campus.

"I thought it was a very daring move," recalled Mike Vanier-Heyden, president of St. Michael's College from 1997 to 2007.

During, because the tiny college took on \$30 million in debt — \$6.5 million in two separate bonds held by Peoples United Bank and a \$16 million loan from the diocese, which held the property in pay off installments it owed as a result of lawsuits stemming from priest sexual abuse. They Peterman, the 93-year-old philanthropist who is Burlington's most senior developer, helped to broker the deal — and she contributed a \$500,000 bridge loan.

The school's finances were relatively

stable at the time of the real estate transaction. And Sanders predicted that a more spacious campus would attract broader and additional students, and she had plans for a \$6 million capital campaign called "The Sky is the Limit."

Burlington College made a very good case, says Sanders. "She was a very dynamic individual. I think she seemed to be in a position where she was poised to take the college to the next level," recalled Robert Givens, executive director of the Vermont Educational and Health Buildings Finance Agency (VIEHBA), the state entity that supplied the for-exchange bonds purchased by Peoples Bank.

The board based its decision, in part, on an outside firm's financial analysis, which noted that enrollment had increased 18 percent — from 162 full-time students in 2006 to 180 in 2010. During the same period, applications nearly tripled, from 76 to 202, and the tuition price went up. The Sanders administration projected continued growth

— 20 percent annually until the college doubled in size.

To some, that prediction seemed eye-rolling, especially for such a tiny school. Vanier-Heyden remembers wondering how Burlington College could attract more students and a trend of declining enrollment. "Even though I admired her nerve and her courage, I had to sometimes wonder because the final student they were drawing in was research a highly specialized niche."

Whether from increased enrollment or targeted fundraising, Sanders wasn't raising the money she was expected to, according to anonymous sources in news stories from the time. Under pressure from the board, she resigned in 2012, and Plunkett, her CFO, was recruited to replace her. "A difference in vision" was the vague explanation offered for her departure.

According to lawyer Reed, that around the time the school started losing sight of its mission to build a "community that's just and humane and interested in

creating beauty." Buying the diocese property wasn't necessarily a bad decision, in Reed's judgment, but "what happened was we took on this debt and then the emphasis became how to get out of the debt."

Plunkett's Problems

When she took over Burlington College, Plunkett inherited her predecessor's \$60 million dollar problem. The college's several subsidy documents a rocky transition. To get a look at those reports, Seven Days filed a public records request with VIEHBA, which receives the independent assessments as a condition of the loan it tendered for the bank.

Responding to a list of problems identified in Burlington College's 2012 audit, Plunkett described her first year of the helm as "one of the most challenging in Burlington College's recent history." The college had agreed to pay Sanders roughly \$300,000 over two years, Plunkett explained in a letter to

the staffers, which depleted resources that would have been used to hire a new CFO. A number of people cycled through the business office, and budgeting suffered as a result. Staff departures adversely affected other departments too, and Phlekkert's letter continued, "Due to these transitions and staffing changes, there was little success with fundraising or enrollment growth during the year."

The new president concluded her response by reassuring staffers she had assembled a team that could turn things around.

One year later, the 2013 audit raised more alarms and expressed "substantial doubt" that the college could continue as a "going concern" — a business term meaning financially viable for at least a year. In her response to the 2013 audit, Phlekkert again described it as "one of the most challenging years in memory at Burlington College with regard to financial oversight and reporting." Once again, she detailed the staff changes that contributed to the situation.

Asked to explain the chronic turnover during a phone interview Friday, Phlekkert said, "When new leadership is in, an institution comes in and works with the board to set a vision for the college, typically there's a change ... When you combine that change in leadership with a financially stressed circumstance, there are hard environments to work in, and they are not for everyone."

More than half of the current employees have signaled they believe Phlekkert is part of the problem. Sixteen of the 28 members of the Faculty and Staff Union took a vote of no confidence in her on July 21. Sixty-eight current students who make up the student union did the same.

In response, the board, which includes City Councilor Karen Paul, State Tourism Commissioner Maggie Smith, Tom Torti, president of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and psychologist/physician Joel Miller, wrote back: "We see that the current administration inherited the economic profile of the College" — and asked faculty and staff to focus on academics and leave strategic decisions up to them.

At a place where questioning authority is a part of the culture, that's unlikely to happen.

Current and former employees criticize what they describe as the administration's "selfishness" approach to recruiting students.

"It seemed like every day a school We're going to go to all the tech schools and get those kids. Then, we're going to go to all the homeschool programs and get those kids," said one staff member Phlekkert and the outgoing dean, Stephen St. Onge, told *Champlain* two years ago in



a short-lived attempt to recruit foreign students.

Currently, the admissions office consists of two recent Burlington College graduates and a student doing work study; the college has been advertising for a director of admissions this semester. Last Friday, Phlekkert acknowledged that office has lacked "solid leadership" over the past year.

There are concerns that as enrollment grows for more students, the school will dilute its identity and lose its niche. "They have that kind of 'wannabe' policy where they take in anybody at this point," said David Littlefield, a current student who helped spearhead the student union.

Another student observed, "I think in recent years we've been trying to appeal

to every type of student ... I don't know if the administration understands that there's a very specific type of student the college is good for."

To that point, there's growing skepticism about whether the school has the resources to sustain the number of new programs that have sprouted up in recent years, many of which are dependent on individual professors, presumably to attract new students. Sanders added as an unidentified master's program, new majors including events and hospitality, international relations, integral psychology, and media activism, and various Cuba study-abroad programs. The college also built up a researchwriting program in recent years, leaving space from a school run by Phlekkert's daughter at an annual cost that was \$983,000 in 2013.

Under Phlekkert's watch, the school started an Institute for Complementary Studies, whose mission is to "create a context for integrative practice, scholarship, and community engagement." Phlekkert still has plans to create a toxicology program, despite Dubreuil's departure, and a preliminary rejection by NEASC, which noted that the school had not done market research to demonstrate that there is demand for such a degree.

Whose Default?

If Burlington College had met Sanders' "conservative" projections, it would currently have 280 full-time students. As of last Friday, roughly 180 were enrolled.

As a result, Burlington College has failed to maintain the cash reserves of about \$1.5 million that it's supposed to keep as part of its loan agreement with the disease. Neither has it kept up an account required for the bank loan. The 2013 audit showed \$8 million in account that should have roughly \$486,000.

Under its agreements, the college needs to replenish those funds before it can start making interest payments to the disease. In the meantime, the disease is charging a penalty for, which had reached \$156,000 by June 2013 and which the school has not paid.

Phlekkert disputes that the college is in default — "In our new deficit, technically, would be if you're supposed to make a payment and you're not" — but she describes it as a "cardinal disagreement."

"Again the disease and the college

have a very open dialogue going on this situation. We respectfully do not agree with one another."

Attempts to reach Reverend David White and financial officer Martin Heale at the diocese were unsuccessful.

Groote, who had previously been aware of the default situation, says Plunkett sent an email on August 8 demanding more information. "I am very upset at the lack of notice and transparency regarding Burlington College's financial problems," he wrote. "Under our loan agreement, the Agency must be informed of any event of default."

There's a "cross default" provision in the loan agreement, according to Groote, which means if the college defaults on the diocese's loan, it's automatically considered in default on the People's Bank loan.

A July 26 *Sixteen Days* story about Burlington College's finances prompted an email exchange among VERSIBRA board members that was revealed as part of the public records request. Cathy Elgrodster wrote to Groote: "I am concerned as a VERSIBRA board member will there be legal fees for the Financing Agency, could we have seen that coming, and would we have denied the board application?"

"Making the decision using hindsight," Groote responded earlier. "I am guessing the board would not have approved the financing."

In a later interview, Groote admitted the agency could end up "with egg on our face" for its decision to authorize the loans, but he was confident the board made the right decision at the time.

The green light was con- firmed on the college, lining up more than \$2 million in committed donations. Plunkett recently told *WCAX* that she was surprised to discover that about half of that money sat to be a bequest, not a pledge. Torstein Haie, fundraising hasn't picked up on her watch, according to the audits. Much of the main building, an imposing brick Victorian that was once an orphange, remains dilapidated and uninhabitable — evidence of a capital campaign that hasn't gotten off the ground.

Yves Baudry, the board chair and a vice president at Pomerleau Real Estate, did not return multiple calls requesting an interview, but in July, he told *Sixteen Days* that Burlington College had put its fundraising plans on hold. "The school

needs to convince potential benefactors it can survive before asking them to open their checkbooks," he explained.

Burlington College doesn't seem to have the same reservations about students, though. "We have, I believe, enrolled three or four students just in the last day or two," Plunkett said on Friday.

Recent withdrawls suggest not all of the students are buying it. "I can't look a student in the eye and say, 'Yeah, you

relatives,'" Plunkett said. "It is a difficult time and it's a stressful time, but I remain so committed to this institution."

Real Estate 101

Last October, Plunkett unveiled a development proposal that, if realized, would reduce the college's debt by about half. Burlington College would sell some land to developer Eric Tarrill, who would construct several hundred units of housing, in addition to an expansion of the college campus.

Tarrill has declined to go into any detail about the terms of their agreement. "I don't think it's particularly useful as helpful to comment further on the plan. The only thing I would say is we are on track," he said early last week.

Asked specifically whether the potential default compels him to postpone the plan, Tarrill responded, "I don't believe everything I read in the paper."

The plan is complicated by the fact that Burlington College purchased much of the land with tax-exempt bonds, which could not be transferred to a private developer without becoming taxable.

Plunkett expects to sign an agreement with Tarrill in September but said mid- Friday that they weren't close to the anticipated 2016 in the earliest.

Tarrill wonders whether that's soon enough to save the school. "I'm not sure if it can get out of trouble on the time period we need." She has a different slant about what the school needs to do to survive. "I think if we had a plan that would appeal more to the community, then we could

really findrise." The longtime legal professor thinks people would rally to preserve, rather than develop, the historic land.

Plunkett was even more blunt about Plunkett's development plan. "I don't think it's going to happen," he said Monday, pointing out, "It takes an awful lot of time to develop."

What happens to the property — the last significant swath of open space in the city — if the school folds?

People's United Bank holds a first mortgage on the campus, and the diocese has a second mortgage.

Bill Kiesel founded Verner Commercial Real Estate and has a specialty in foreclosures. Banks typically

aren't interested in owning property, Kiesel explained, so even when a debtor has fallen behind on payments, "I think the bank's position is always to try to work out something with the customer before they have to foreclose."

If that fails, the lender would almost certainly seize the property and sell it off. After People's recoups its money the diocese would likely be entitled to the left-over proceeds in order to mitigate its loss.

Plunkett declined to say what the college is on its loan, but he makes it clear that he pitched in because he thought Sanders was "doing an exceptionally good job." The current administration has made "some interim payments," he said. People's pushed back the due date for the principal payment by a year and he's prepared to do that again. "I know they won't be able to pay me this December, so I'll just give them another year."

Beyond that, Pomerleau said, he intends to stay off the boy. "I would hate to see it go down," he said. "I don't want to get involved." When the diocese still owned the property, Pomerleau was, at one point, considering purchasing and developing part of the land, but the deal "didn't work out financially." Would he be interested again if the bank foreclosed? "No," Pomerleau said. "It would be millions of dollars. I've got the money to do it, but I've got so many projects across the state." He is a good partner to stand by? "I'm in a good position to stand by." If his son and business partner, Eric, were interested, the older Pomerleau said, "I'd advise against it."

Littlefield thinks foreclosure could be around the corner. "I think there is very little hope for the institution to survive in the future, and by the future I mean within the next few summers." The Maine native isn't so worried about his personal academic experience — he is one semester away from a bachelor's degree in his graduation. But for other students, "I have grown concerns about what their education will look like in the coming summer," he says.

A test-failed felt circle was safety-pinned to Littlefield's shirt. Along with other student union members, he's taken to wearing it as a tribute to the college's old building, which is painted the same color.

When Burlington College sold that property and moved a half mile north into its palatial digs, it was supposed to be the start of something transformative. But Littlefield remembers it as the start of when "the school began to crumble." Four years later, his nostalgia for the cramped quarters the college left behind illustrates just how far all that's remained.

Contact alicia@sixteendays.com



I WOULD HATE TO SEE IT GO DOWN.

TONY POMERLEAU

should come here," said one student.

"Seeing new students come into the school and sitting there on their admissions table is just heart wrenching," current student Littlefield said. "It's just hard to watch them going through the halls and hearing all staff that I had promised a few years ago."

Plunkett is replanning the admissions office by bringing several students with expertise in turnaround enrollment situations.

And the embattled president has assigned another consultant — Bill McGarry, who also advised her on the development deal — to help improve her rapport with faculty and staff. "I'm looking forward to working to strengthen

It Takes Two...

A tango music and dance community flourishes in Vermont

BY XIAN CHIANG-WARIN

It's 45 minutes into Queen City Tango's twice-monthly milonga, and my tango partner and I are nowhere near ready to join the other dancers. In a narrow-floored dance studio hung with paper lanterns at North End Studios in Burlington, half a dozen couples step, sweep and twirl counter-clockwise around the room. As newcomers to the notoriously difficult Argentinean ballroom dance, we're advised to begin by walking — and not in the graceful, improvised steps that carry the other couples around the floor. Nope. We're strutting side by side like grade-school kids on a hock line, balanced on the balls of our feet and pacing in straight lines across the wooden floorboards.

"Take walk," David Linsley, QCT's vice president, says encouragingly as I strive to keep pace with the music and my partner's movements while holding my spouse in rigid ballroom posture. Elated, twirl and both click on the floor around us. I wobble a few times in my stocking feet.

The dance, or *milonga*, gathered at Friday's milonga is a word that refers to both the music and the place where tango is danced; the part of the Burlington music night-life tango community. Similar groups have sprung up elsewhere in the state, including Stowe, Brandon, Rutland and Middlebury. Annual events such as this week's Soonee Tango Music Festival and September's Moonlight in Vermont feature in Brandon bring international dancers and musicians to the Green Mountains.

The Burlington aficionados attend regular classes, practice and dance events hosted by QCT and sister organization TangoWise — the latter run by Klimbush Styler, who's taught regularly since 2007. In addition, these dancers are friends. They have potlucks. They go to regional dances together. Five of them recently took a road trip to Quebec to buy custom-made dance shoes.

Among Styler's colleagues are an architect, a photographer, a computer programmer, a hospice nurse, a schoolteacher, a museum manager and a retired educator. Some have danced professionally or recreationally, for decades; others began more recently. What they have in common is their love for a difficult-as-music and physically intense dance form rooted in a culture quite different from their own.

QCT and TangoWise's organizers estimate the local tango community



DANCE

is between 30 and 50, with a core group of about a dozen. "It's a community of people who really care about each other and the tango," says Tatjana Odoi, a cofounder of QCT. She's also the student for Linsley, a Burlington-based tango, traditional French and jazz group that performs monthly in local bars.

Tango classes have popped up in Burlington in the mid-'90s, remembers Hugo Marimex Casals, another QCT founder. The most regular teacher was

Gerd Linschmann, a German-born black-tie-vest-wearing with a bullet and tango background. He now organizes the Moonlight in Vermont festival.

Burlington's tango scene started small and has not aggregated. "Gerd was coming up once a month to teach tango, and there were maybe four or five people in the room," recalls Marimex Casals. Though he's a native of Argentina, his interest in tango began later in life, after he'd already moved to Vermont. "[Gerd would] come

back a month later, and there'd be me in the room, next month, eight. But the problem was that there wasn't a place to practice, so everybody forgot everything in the month that they didn't practice. I didn't practice."

Marimex Casals, Odoi and fellow endorser Hugo Bell began meeting weekly to practice together in a yoga studio. In the mid-2000s, when Linschmann announced that he'd no longer hold classes in Burlington, the three took up the challenge of continuing on their own. They've held classes, concerts, dances and practice sessions for nearly a decade under the QCT name, a slowly incorporated non-profit last year. Fostering a larger community around the dance, they say, has always been the goal.

"We try to be very welcoming to people who want to come in," Odoi says. "And QCT has helped those of us who've been with the community a long time grow as people, and grow to have understanding and our admiration of the tango."

Argons who'd heard tango's tango music or seen a pair of dancers sweep across a floor might find it easy to admire. The dance is even more impressive when you learn that most of those graceful motions are mind-imposed. Unlike other social and partner dances, tango has no set steps. "The leader often creates tempo, place and steps in the spur of the moment. The follower adapts, responding to pressure from her partner at the points where their bodies touch."

"It's a precise dance," says Styler of TangoWise. "It's not easy. I think it's the hardest social dance to learn because it's so improvisational and so dependent on communication through body. Not everybody has the partner or the wiring for that."

If you're a beginner, as I quickly discover, it's best to forget about any flourishes or fancy footwork — mastering the tango walk is hard enough.

"It's a curse," Linsky cautions. He sweeps one foot forward, deliberately tripping the floor as if breaking a lover's arm, then tilts his weight forward from his torso. His second foot naturally drifts toward his first.

I try on the move. I do a half-step with the wobbles, through the hipbones to exaggerate the gesture brings new issues. After we shuffle across the room a few more times, something happens. My feet start moving a split second behind my partner's, suddenly more steady pace. Without a verbal cue or conscious decision, he's leading and I'm following.

One night, Kip Meeker was at a table at the Irishman watching Lou Reed play. This was some time in the late 1990s, when Paul, the "Father of the Electric Guitar" played the famed New York City jazz club every Tuesday. Meeker was visiting the city from Vermont with friends, including his old band mate Greg Novak, who was suddenly struck by an atherosclitic idea.

"I leaned over to our friend Dennis and said, 'When Lou Reed finishes this song, tell him the best guitar player in Vermont is here and wants to play,'" Novak recalls recently by phone.

As soon as the song finished, their friend did exactly that, getting within inches of Paul's face to relay the message. Paul asked of this mysterious Green Mountain amateur had brought his own axe — which Meeker hadn't. To which Paul replied, "Well, he can play mine." He stood and removed his guitar.

After some prodding from Novak, a reluctant Meeker strode to the stage, where Paul's band mates exchanged nervous glances.

"One guy in the band kinda told him to get in the band," recalls Novak. "But then Kip started playing."

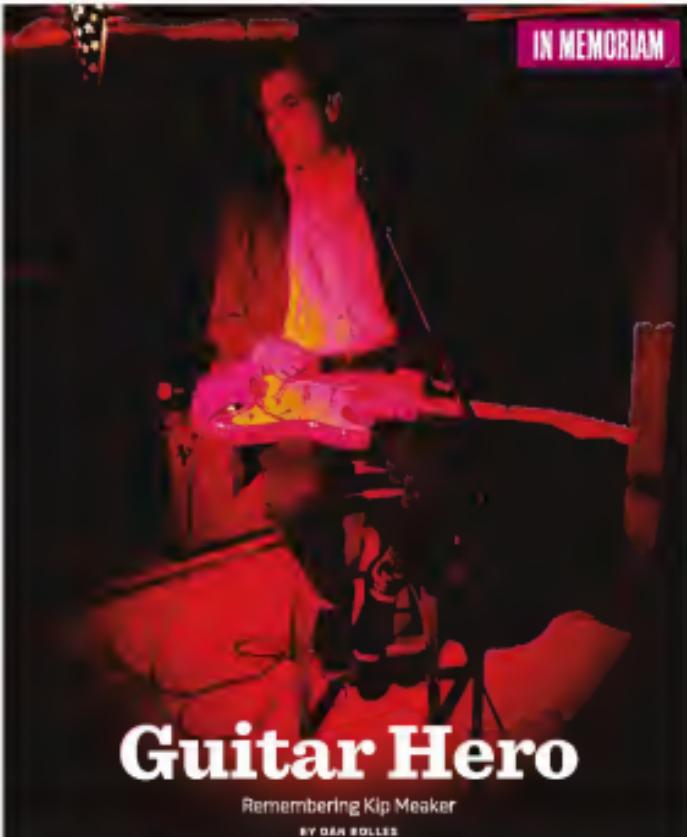
First, the bass player joined in, following Meeker's tearing lead. Before long the whole band jumped in on the chords to the blues standard "Sweet Little Angel." That's when Meeker started singing.

"He blew the doors off the place," Novak says. Meeker finished the song and casually walked off the stage to a standing ovation from an NBC crowd who had only just discovered what Vermont audiences had known since the late 1960s: Nobody sang or played quite like Kip Meeker.

"That was probably the greatest night of his life," says Novak.

Shelton "Kip" Meeker passed away on Friday, August 8, at age 65. He had been battling an undisclosed illness for years, but his passing was still somewhat unexpected. The Barre native leaves a legacy as one of the finest Vermont guitar players and rolemodels of his generation.

According to those who knew him well, Meeker was a profoundly complex individual. His talents as both a singer and guitarist were virtually without peer. He was an equally gifted painter and had an insatiable intellectual curiosity. He also appears to have been an expert at karate (Japanese gold belt), an excellent rose hybridizer and an authority on



Guitar Hero

Remembering Kip Meeker

BY DAN BOLLES

the works of Henry Miller, among his many other literary favorites.

"He was about the most complicated person I've ever known," says Novak.

Meeker could be a difficult man when intense passion and impulsive behavior were often as much a burden as a

blessing. His dark sense of humor, graft dances, caravans似 worldtravel and battles with perennial demons paint a picture resembling a latter day Charlie Bilezikian — right down to the detail that Meeker, like that writer, worked for the post office for some 25 years.

"He had a dark side and a light side, like any of us," says Novak. "It's like the six blind people touching the elephant. What you thought he was depended on what part you got. Some people thought he was aloof; others thought he was warm," Novak continues. "Others



thought he was hard, some thought he was soft. His personality covered everything, kind of like with Jimi."

Meeker was also known as a more-or-less power blues and rock guitarist with Burlington-based garage bands such as Aviil, Jerome Mystic Movement and Uncle Sam. He frequently sat in with Big Joe Javelin and the Unknowns those band, in addition to leading his own groups over the years. Meeker was so gifted, in fact, that while he was living in Boston in the 1970s, he was invited to substitute as a guitarist for the then-forming rock band also called Boston. After they heard him play and sing, he was offered a gig ... in the band's front ranks.

"He turned them down," says Meeker's daughter, Abby Meeker, in a recent phone call. "He was just never interested in fame."

Asked if her father felt any "fifth Beatle" regret whenever "More Than a Feeling" came on the radio, Abby Meeker laughs.

"He thought they were really cheesy," she says.

"He had no tolerance for bad bands," says Abby. "He'd be physically sick if a band wasn't up to his standards."

An aficionado of Meeker's guitar playing could be; he also had a softer side, especially when it came to singing.

"He loved to sing your ballads," says Jeff Solisbury, who played drums with Meeker in several settings and refers to his musical style as "recognize guitar playing." Solisbury also owns a portrait Meeker painted of the drummer's dog, Dobby. "Kip was a vocal charmer," Solisbury continues. "He could sound like Ray Charles, Bill Ring, Glen Campbell, Johnny Hartman. He really had a broad musical output."

Frank Jenny played with Meeker in a band called the Tough Judges in the 1980s. At the time, he notes, original music was a rough sell at local clubs. So while Meeker was a fine songwriter, the band played mostly covers to draw



Photo by Steve Liss for VTDigger

a crowd. Rather than follow the typical bar band rock template, Meeker insisted on throwing some curveballs. Like "Wichita Lineman" — a ballad written by Jonny Webb and popularized by country crooner Glen Campbell.

"He was never afraid to pole and prod the audience a little," says Jenny.

That's an understatement. Witness a live recording of "Wichita Lineman" taken from a Tough Judges club show. The band recognizes the ballad with ragged guitar and 1980s-style synth. Above it all is Meeker, his honeyed voice cooing with almost smugness. "I am a human for the common man," his sensibility. It's certainly unconventional. And it's weirdly brilliant.

"It would always take people a minute to figure out what was going on," says Jenny. "Many of crowds were accustomed to, say, Jimi Hendrix covers. But that they'd eat it up. They loved it."

It's honestly hard to tell of Meeker's rendition of the song is serious or a lark. Judging from the stories his friends tell about him — many of which would be impossible to print even in an all-weekly — the master might be both.

"He could be an incredibly hard man to read," continues Jenny. "It's all kind of ties into his unguarded nature."

Phil Ahair, another frequent Meeker band mate, recalls a classic "big one" of those bands was on its way back from a local gig in Connecticut. "It was late and we were incredibly tired," he says.

As they passed a cemetery, Ahair recalls seeing Meeker look longingly out the window.

"He's just staring out at these gravestones," says Ahair. "Then we heard him murmur — it was under his breath but loud enough for us to hear: 'Lucky bastards!'"

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Pushing the Envelope

Theater review: *Love Letters*, Unadilla Theatre

BY ERIK ESKILSEN

Little did audiences at the 1988 debut of A.R. Gurney's play *Love Letters* know just how quiet its premise would soon seem. Performed entirely by two actors portraying correspondents in their characters' exchange from 1937 to 1962, the play celebrates a time-honored form of communication — the written, signed, sealed and delivered letter — that would soon yield to the onslaught of email.

While the centrality of written correspondence to the play may inspire nostalgic reverie in the spectators raised in the twilight of the manual typewriter, the couple also does serious dramatic work. The characters' letters offer text — sometimes quite superficial — that implies deep, rich subject. Often these words, so constrained by the effort required to compose them, vividly congeal in the spectators' minds.

The operatic approach was a winning formula for Gurney, who saw *Love Letters* claim a spot as the chart-topping 1989 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The play is being revived on Broadway this fall with a rotating cast to include the luminous pairings of Brian Dennehy and Mira Sorvino, Dennis Lehane and Carol Burnett, Alan Alda and Candice Bergen, Stacy Keach and Diana Rigg, and Anjelica Huston and Martin Sheen.

Alex Brown, who directs the *Love Letters* production currently running at the rustic Unadilla Theatre, says in a program note that finding themselves in such illustrious company was a happy accident for her and her cast. Now as the Broadway revival reached her after rehearsals had begun, the overall quality of



the Unadilla production, however, is an accident. Brown and company execute Gurney's descriptively simple play with a sensitivity and skill that realize the emotional complexities that have made *Love Letters* a respected entry in the canon of contemporary American drama.

The play begins immediately enough — in several guises, in fact — when Andrew Malapane (Todd III (Brooks Pearson) voices a formally worded acceptance of an invitation to attend a birthday party in honor of classmate Melissa Gorham (Sarah Brack). The next move is in Melrose: a reiteration of the requisite thank you note to Andy for his birthday gift, L. Frank Baum's book *The Lost Princesses of Oz*. She inquires why he gave her that title, Andy responds, and a young friendship is born.

From the start, though, the relationship proves complicated. While the content of the protagonists' letters suggest their common ground to affective society not far from New York City, Melrose is critical of Andy's eagerness to please his elders — such as by writing preliminary letters full of things they've told him to write. While Andy finds inspiration in his father's notion of letter writing as an act of putting forth one's best image, Melrose sees this as a tiresome performance; she would rather draw pictures than write at all.

This difference in attitude, combined with the fact that Melrose's family is significantly wealthier than Andy's, causes to define the two characters individually and to each other over the next five decades of their lives, loves and letters.

They'll both be subjected to dancing lessons — a class signifier — and packed off to boarding school. But Melrose's permanent family dysfunction will only intensify her jaded outlook as she pursues a career as an artist. Andy in stark contrast, will remain aspired to and even obtaining the big League and affably useless accessible to pedigree men in post-World War II America.

Andy and Melrose's profound differences notwithstanding, they do cross paths frequently over the course of their lives. Some of the play's most poignant moments are those when events conspire to prevent their reunion.

Gurney's script superbly renders the periods through which the play progresses, affording *Love Letters* a long narrative scope and evocative imagery

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ence in the absence of much movement or production design. Throughout the performance, Biltmore's players sit, side by side, behind two wooden lecterns from which they read their script. Melrose wears an understated party dress that suits many decades. Andy sports a blue blazer and brush-cut — timeless WASP attire.

The apparent simplicity of a typical *Love Letters* production is often cited as one reason for its appeal to theater troupes; the actors need not even memorize their lines. Yet after challenges lurk in the margins: As Melrose and Andy, respectively, mature, actors Brock and Pearson must play characters ranging in age from 7 or 8 to late fifties. Because the characters are corresponding at a physical remove, the actors can't interact onstage without undercutting their presentational viewpoints.

What they can try to do is evoke a range of emotional states through deft dramatic readings and subtle physical responses to what they hear. Under Brown's capable direction, Brock and Pearson rise to this challenge.

Brock is equally convincing at conveying Melrose's brittle youth disdain and her middle-aged world-weariness. Occasionally, her delivery adds touches of vulnerability to the text of letters in which Melrose has kept her guard. Some of Brock's strongest beats are vocalic, such as those moments when digesting news has contradicted Melrose's efforts to see Andy. Her shudders say her chin drops, her gaze finds a vacant spot on the floor. It's impossible to read the body language as anything other than truth.

Pearson likewise shifts his vocal inflection to mark the passage of Andy's lifetime. His early measures drop with drollness, and he never questions letter writing's positive contribution to his personal development. In middle age, Andy's countenance evokes the confidence and conviction of a man in the easy of leadership. But he, too, becomes vulnerable — though the choices are different for him — and his voice

betrays the emotional disorder his later years can't control.

Throughout the play, impersonal fixed forms — wedding invitations, birth announcements, holiday cards and the like — create benchmarks against which to gauge Melrose and Andy's progress through life and toward or away from each other.

If anything occasions a lull in this captivating onstage correspondence, it's Brock's and Pearson's somewhat limited repertoires of facial expression. Flicks of eyes, compressed, angled smiles, giddiness and a few other moods very well, but, over the course of a full-length play, one might enjoy seeing an even broader range of responses. Pearson may spend a bit too much time staring off toward a particular corner of the theater, as if expecting to see Melrose come sauntering down the center aisle.

Given its title, *Love Letters* tempts an audience to experience the play as a meditation on love, which it is — the complex, multifaceted love of friends, lovers, spouses and whatever one calls that channeled emotion on the receiving end of a message from the heart. The play can also be experienced as a meditation on letters themselves. In Ursuline's solid production, written words have the capacity to reveal true selves and express deep feelings. But because those words are offered unilaterally — as documents, as *voix* in the ensemble — the recipient can dodge, reject and misinterpret them with relative ease. Also, letters can arrive too late.

Judging by the American theater zeitgeist — and Ursuline Theatre's accomplished rendition — these *Letters* are right on time. ☐

Disclosure: Director Alex Brown writes theater reviews for this newspaper.

THE PLAY CELEBRATES A TIME-HONORED FORM OF COMMUNICATION — THE WRITTEN, SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED LETTER.

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INFO

Love Letters, written by A.R. Gurney, directed by Alex Brown, produced by Ursuline Theatre. Thursday and Friday, August 21 and 22, and Sunday through Saturday, August 23 to 30, 7:30 p.m., at Ursuline Theatre in Montclair. \$20 to \$40. www.ursuline.org

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Trail Blazers

Vermont's Long Trail Brewing Company turns 25

BY HANNAH PALMER ESAN

On a dismal afternoon at the height of last week's rain, Billy Gault stands in the basement of a 125-year-old mill on Route 4 in Bridgewater. "Cellar cellulitis," he says, reminiscing long days and nights working underground.

The room is dark. Water leaks in, pooling in inch-deep puddles in the low spots. Gault has been the facility manager — and all-around maintenance man, says his coworkers — at Long Trail Brewing Company since Andy Phinney and Jim Nogean founded the brewery in 1989. The dingy old mill cellar was the company's home until it outgrew the space in 1995.

Phinney and Nogean retired in the early aughts, but Gault and several other brewery employees remember the "cellar shudder" days. Back then, the 20-something men were brewing beers most Vermonters had never heard of. Their 15-barrel system was cobbled together from dairy equipment scavenged from abandoned barns.

At the time, the brewery — then called Mountain Brewers — produced fewer than 10,000 barrels a year. It wasn't easy getting people on "macro-brews"; they were then called — not even fairly straightforward ones, such as the brewery's flagship amber ale, Long Trail Ale. But, as Long Trail expanded, Vermont's craft beer scene grew up around it, from just a handful of breweries in 1989 to more than 60 — and counting — today.

Long Trail currently produces about 100,000 barrels per year. While gearing up for its anniversary celebration the Saturday, August 23, a few long-time company members take Seven Days for a walk down memory lane.

A quarter century ago, Gault entered that mill basement as a contractor. It was a mess. "This was completely packed



with junk," he recalls. "We were in some lights as we could see enough to clean the place out."

About six months later, Gault went to work for Mountain Brewers. He was

YOU THINK ABOUT THESE STORIES, BACK IN THE MILL — WE WERE A BUNCH OF CRAZY KIDS.

DAVE HARTMANN

Phinney and Nogean's first enduring employee, The three began building out a brew house and making fresh, European-style beers that Phinney hoped would compete with imports. Within a few years, Mountain Brewers had grown to include Matt Quisenberry (now the operations manager) and Dave Hartmann (barmaster).

Gault recall blasting through a wall when a new piece of equipment — one of their first made specifically for brewing beer — wouldn't fit through the door.

"I remember that day really," Quisenberry says, laughing. "There was that tank — we were in awe."

Gault worked a jackhammer and carved out a half-moon-shaped hole in the masonry basement wall. The hole is still there today, though the brewing equipment is long gone.

"You think about these stories, back in the mill — we were a bunch of crazy kids," Hartmann says. "These are fond memories, but things were a lot harder back then. I remember a lot of duct tape, and stuff that didn't fit together right, and lots of things breaking and not really working that well ... Those things have really gone away."

In the mid-'90s, the brewery began making an intensely dark, roasty double-ale style beer. They dubbed it Double Dog and quickly served it in their tasting room. "It was a weird thing we did in the brewery," Quisenberry recalls.

Phinney had tried to mix the beer so they'd pour it on the sky. "I brought it to Andy, and he was like, 'I have no interest in marketing a beer that strong,'" Hartmann says. "It was 12 percent ABV [alcohol by volume]. By modern terms, it's not a strong beer at all ... But at that time, he was vehement about it."

They brewed another batch anyway, and then another, and another. "Once people get wind of it, there was no holding it back," Quisenberry says.

Double Dog was an early gem in the company catalog, which also included the amber ale and several seasonal brews — quads that could outlast several years, if not the general public.

Still, "I think Andy recognized that he needed some beer gods on staff," Quisenberry says. "So he came down and I completely geeked, and we're like —"

"...let's brew some happy IPAs!" Hartmann says, flashing the sentence. On the East Coast, beers like that wouldn't enter the mainstream for at least another decade.

Still, demand soared for the flagship ale. The brewery outgrew their basement, built an expansive new facility just down the road, and rechristened the company "Long Trail" after the popular brew. It was late 1995, and microbreweries were starting to catch on.

At that time, Quisenberry says, he was unversed with Belgian beers and created

TRAILBLAZERS 49-51



11 SIDE dishes

BY HANNAH PALMER/ISBAN & ALICE LEVITT

Change of Season

WE ARE NOW AT SALT FESTIVAL

SALT OF Montpelier is about to lose its chef of a year, **EVAN JASCHI**. That owner (and former Seven Days food editor) **LAUREN POLDHISTER** isn't seeking his replacement. Instead, she says, she took the opportunity to rethink her culinary goals.

Lauren Poldhister



"I'm trying to get away from all the slabs of what constitutes a typical restaurant and not to be bound by what other people are doing — just what I want to do," says Poldhister. "Zachar will cook his final meals at SALT at the end of this month. In the first week of September, the petite restaurant on South Street will be making some changes."

The plan involves an additional Poldhister, Lauren's sister **MARINA**. The recent recipient of a PhD in pharmacology and toxicology, **Elisabeth Poldhister** has been applying her laboratory-based accuracy to baking at SALT. In the business' new life, she'll also be working with her sister as a culinary consultant.

Beginning next month, Poldi will serve dinner only on Tuesday evenings. On Friday

and Saturday, the sisters will prepare prix fixe dinners with themes, much like those the eclectic Salt has served since it opened in late 2009. Each Sunday meal will be a more casual, family-style dinner focused on farm-fresh fare.

The rest of the week, Poldhister will devote the space to fostering small businesses. The full kitchen will be available to home-based food businesses as well as host pop-up dinners from purveyors such as **WIGGINS & PEPPER**, which will serve weekly meals there. Other interested businesses can contact Poldhister at elisabeth@poldi.com.

But Poldhister says she's perhaps most excited about her new life as a leisure consultant, in which she plans to offer a slate of services that will engage her clients to cook for themselves at home. Those might include dinner parties, visits, guidance in making the most of CSA boxes and private cooking classes at clients' homes or at Salt. Poldhister also hopes to cater to restaurants in the area and, perhaps, around the country.

Not bad for a former food critic.

— AL

Bike to Barn to Table

WEEDING-SEED BENEFITS A HUNTINGTON FOODIE

FOR years, **MARINA**

WILLIAMS has hoped to cultivate the space inside her favorite white dairy barn in **Huntington**. As the owner of **AMBLE FARMS** and its namesake farmstand, Williams sells organic vegetables from the barn on a self-service, honor-system model.

She found a willing partner in **DEAN HARRIS**, who runs **BAKERY BAKERY** from his home in Huntington.

Yes, We Khanh

WILLISTON'S MAPLE TREE PLACE GOES VIETNAMESE

A new Vietnamese restaurant is coming to 112 Church Way in **Maple Tree Place** in Williston. Khanh Le and his wife, Khanh Pham, have been hard at work renovating the 1,300-square-foot space between **Yogurt City** and **Asian Bistro** and hope to open **San SAI** by the end of the month. The moniker is a play on their shared name as well as a reference to the popular noodle soup — though those will be far from the restaurant's sole attraction.



In fact, Pham comes from the city of **Hoi An**, where the predominant soup, **bun bo Hoi**, features a spicy, lemongrass-flavored beef broth that's light years away from pho. Besides that and a variety of other soups and noodle bowls, Le says, he and his wife will serve banh mi and Vietnamese-style pastries. But the similarities to other local Vietnamese restaurants end there.

"We try a lot of places here. They're authentic, some what, but we wanted to be more authentic," Le says. Once the couple has gotten the bones under control in the first month or so, they'll expand their menu to include dishes that Le describes as "more delicate and more authentic."

Those include a banh-pat-style meal with a spicy soy broth in which to cook raw ingredients at the table. Family dinners will consist of multiple courses, including soup and whole fish. Le says that even before the menu expansion, fish will be a hallmark of the restaurant, with rice dishes served with a selection of seafood.

For people in the market for pre-meal dining, Pho K&B should open up a new twist of options, spicy and mild alike.

— AL

Village, offering croissants, wood-fired breads and other treats in a CSA model. "I had been looking for a retail space," **Monica** says, "and [Wiliams] was interested in utilizing her barn more than she has been. We just thought, 'Why not do this together?'

They secured land

funding from a few "angel investors," **Monica** says, and this Sunday, August 24, they'll hold a fundraiser for the project. **SEE THE BARN** is a Huntington bistro that's not unlike the Addison Tear de Farne. Rider every foot and donations will help fund the barn's transformation.

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Trail Blazers



a pilot batch of beer, which Nielsen disclosed. The beer, he says, was fairly sour and, if flavored with berries as Quimby planned, would likely have turned a very blue. "Andy was like, 'I don't think people are ready for pink beer,'" Nielsen remembers.

They tossed it down but kept the wheat base and added blackberries. The result was an crystal-clear, gold-toned ale with fruity overtones — not a lambic at all, but a crafty drinking companion built to the curious but soft-timed 1990s palate. They named it Blackberry Wheat.

According to Kurt Stauder, executive director of the Vermont Brewers Association and co-author of *Vermont Beer: History of a Brewing Revolution* (History Press, 2004), it was a perfect gateway brew — pleasant, approachable, not far from the plainer path. "Blackberry Wheat was a great 'steer beer,'" he tells *Down East* via phone. "If you were someone who was drinking Coors Light or something, it was a great beer to get you started."

Blackberry Wheat was a runaway hit. At one point, Nielsen says, it made up 25 percent of Long Trail's sales — instrumental for a summer beer. They began brewing it year-round and installed new equipment to facilitate its production.

In 2003, after a 17-year run, Long Trail put the owner-old bear to bed and replaced it with two new summer beers for 2004: Moody Clouds, a Belgian-style witbier, and the light, bright, sunnier ale Summer Ale.

"It's kind of hard to brew some of those other beers on [the Blackberry Wheat] system," Nielsen says.

"Now we fill [those same tanks] with Linde (double IPA)," Hartman adds.

Linsch is different from any other wine release in Long Trail's history. A

big, round, hoppy beer, it's very much in line with today's palate. Even the label has an resemblance to the company's standard packaging, er to the recent rebrand. "The label doesn't scream, 'Long Trail,'" Stauder says. "It screams, 'Linda'."

The bear defended last fall: The brewers know they had a winner, they say, but wanted months to refine it until they'd secured enough hops for a big run.

"As soon as we rolled it out," Nielsen says, "the response was amazing." They ran through a year's supply of hops in three months and had to stop production and more were needed.

"We've gone through periods when we couldn't make [Linda] for a few weeks, and it's a big deal," Nielsen says. "When that disappears, people let us know."

When regional demand outpaced supply, the company redirected the bear's distribution to Vermont. "We pulled it back from all our other states," Nielsen notes. "Vermont's the home market" — and the top priority.

For Long Trail's brewers, Linda was a long time coming. "We've always had big, hoppy, bitter beers," Hartman says. "But we've never had an opportunity to make and sell them."

The bear is as much a reflection of its creators as it is of the brewers who made it. "With the market changing so much, we could do something bigger and bolder," Nielsen says.

Bardie IPA, by contrast, went somewhere Hartman recalls one that "was extremely happy for that nose."

"It was like 5.5 IBUs [International Bitterness Units]," Gault says. (For reference, Linda and Piddlehead Brewing's



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More food after the
classified section

1 SIDE dishes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43



John Doe Barn in Hinghamton



Bread from Hingham Barn



Second Fiddle double IPA, see both 80 IBUs, and the Alchemist's Heady Topper is 120 IBUs.)

That early IPA "was completely out of hand back then," Quist says, "and consumers let us know that."

In the early 1990s, drinkers were still puzled by small batch beers, which looked and tasted very different from the fatty, yellow American lagers they were accustomed to. "The consumer wasn't ready to go that far yet," Quist says. "If you went into a bar back then, maybe you could get Guinness in an Irish bar

but it was mostly American mainstream products."

In those early days, Phinney usually delivered the beer — mostly to Windsor County bars and pubs on Mountain Road near Burlington.

"We were one of the early accounts," says Marny McGrath, who owns the Inn at Long Trail (where the brewery's namesake, Rootpath, crosses Route 4 near St. Albans Pass). "We still have the original tap handle, though they keep threatening to take it away."

That tap handle is 25 years old,

Riders can choose from two courses: 8.5-mile, mostly flat route, with five snack stops at farms and businesses, and a more challenging 30.9-mile loop with three farm or food stops and an interesting hill climb. There's also a non-excitement ride. After the ride, farmers and riders will return to the barn for a delicious lunch with music.

Once Williamson and Meeks gather the funds — they're also planning a crowd-funding campaign — and round up contractors, they will build a commercial kitchen and a retail space in the barn, with market seating that could someday grow into a cafe.

Williamson would like to expand her farmstand to include meats and cheeses, which she hasn't been able to sell on the self-service system. The pair would also like to make the large planned kitchen available as an incubator space for start-ups and food businesses.

Both acknowledge that the project is in its early

stages, and say they're keeping their plans vague so they can remain flexible. But Meeks says, "My dream is to be looking in the kitchen this time next year!" Williamson adds, "Hinghamton is the strongest business food income; it's incredible what we have going on here. We have a winery; we have a great dairy and a brewery, and several wonderful businesses."

There are businesses she'd like to bring to the barn — in one way or another — under one roof. "This barn has been a landmark in the valley," Williamson says. "We love this beautiful building in a great location. We want to use our infrastructure to benefit the local producers."

— H.P.E.

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Clever Comfort

Grilling the Chef: Michael Wemeke

BY ALICE LEVITT

Michael Wemeke chose a career in the kitchen after Tom Cruise feasted his own plan.

"I really wanted to fly Transair for the Navy. I was to school for aerospace engineering and wanted to be a fighter pilot," he recalls. Wemeke devoted his youth to ROTC and rigorous academics in pursuit of his goal — and then Tom Cruise came out. "Suddenly every 17-year-old boy in the country wanted to be a pilot," he says.

With a wider field of candidates, the military changed the eyeight requirements. Wemeke's vision was just below the accepted cutoff. Instead of continuing on a path that would have him as a flight crew's "Gauss" at best, Wemeke embraced the job that had been putting him through college.

Vermont diners should be grateful for the chef's imperfect eyes. Wemeke has been garnishing his brand of craft food at Waterbury's Franklin Pig since 2012. Before that, he was known as the man behind the Rusty Nail Bar & Grill's Donnagle, a bacon and egg-topped cheddarburger served between two duck-fat doughnuts.

Though Wemeke got his start in California kitchens, he is no Guy Fieri knockoff. (Granted, his chocolate-caramel donut cake for two, still on Pro Pig's menu since its introduction at an iconic April one-off night called Schickly's Tavern, sounds like-made-for-the-Food-Network clown.) His wit



goadly proves he's got more going for him than fatty swirls.

The chef speaks four languages, including those Spanish learned from Mexican kitchen workers he befriended early in his career at San Diego modernist temple George's at the Cove. He got his Gausses from his grandmother, who inspired him to cook. Her recipes still provide the hearty heart of Wemeke's cuisine.

The promise of a suddenly down-home experience drew Wemeke to the Green Mountains five years ago. Disenchanted with kitchens after running a corporate steakhouse in Virginia, the chef fled to the Cellars at Jasper Hill to become a cheesemaking "Mama" and Andy Keller, owners of Jasper Hill, are the reason Pro Pig still involved in food at all," Wemeke says. "They get me excited about artisanal products and farm-to-table."

Chef Michael Wemeke

Age: 44

Restaurant: Pro Pig bacon Pig

Location: Waterbury

Age of Restaurant: 3 and a half years

Cheesemaking experience: Chef Wazeq Nabi Bar & Srite Sivyer (2001-03); cheesemaker, Cellars at Jasper Hill (2003-06); Herdwick羊乳酪, Bégin's at the Cove, San Diego, Calif. (2008-09)

What's on the menu? South Carolina-style chopped pork bacon, macaroni and cheese, Dutch biscuits



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After working in commercial kitchens, the chef found the slow-paced preparation of charcuterie, charcuterie at first — then curing. Wernick spent time doing prep at Stowe Mountain Lodge before landing his spot at the Rusty Nail. These days, Jasper Hill's Bayley Hazen Blue and Cheddar Clothbound Cheddar both claim regular spots on Prohibition Pig's menu in deference to the Rustlers.

Perfect cheese is part one of the simple pleasures that makes Wernick tick. He names two natural cheddars — Vermont's Jell Robachin as an inspiration in consistency that he wishes to capture — albeit a version of "authentic" that encompasses half-butter melted butter.

The chef who loves excellent local products espouses equal passion for the prepared foods of his childhood. What else motivates Vermont's prince of pork? We grilled him to find out.

SEVEN DAYS: How did your family eat when you were growing up?

MICHAEL WERNICK: It was pretty simple. My mother grew up dirt poor. She cooked a lot of the stuff she grew up eating, like oyster stew, which was just oysters and black pepper and milk. We ate a lot of macaroni with meat sauce and meat, but she also roasts chicken and made good meatloaf. It was a fantastic meal, actually. We ate wholesome, good food.

We'd go out to visit his brother in central Pennsylvania, and that's when I got hooked on charcuterie-type things. When I tried scrapple for the first time, it was a huge revelation.

82. Did you always love food?

MW: I liked to be in the kitchen, whether

it was my mother or my grandmother cooking Thanksgiving dinner or whatever. In the Boy Scouts, I had to learn to cook because you share duties when you're at summer camp. I always volunteered to cook, because I didn't want to eat burnt eggs and raw bacon.

83. Name three foods that make life worth living.

MW: Just three? Pizza, for sure. It's all simple stuff. Mac and cheese. And a good burger. A lot of people would say fried green, but I'm in the camp of Jell Robachin. His favorite thing is just a good potato with good butter. Nothing fancy, just what makes you feel good.

84. What's the last thing you ate?

MW: I made a Chef Boyardee pizza last night. It's the one thing I don't tell anybody that I do. There's something about the sauce. My mom used to make them for us when I was a kid, when my dad was out of town.

There's something about taking the time to make this horrible crust, put on some cheese and pepperoni on it. There's something about it if it weeds my stomach, but I don't care. It's so good going down.

85. What foods are always in your pantry?

MW: For sure, elbow macaroni. My momma thinks I'm insane, because every time we go to the store she's "Really? Mac elbow?"

I make macaroni, tomato and meat — tomato and cheese. It always goes back to my childhood. I don't know why. There's always elbow and always salmons. I've got 18 kinds of salt. That's hyperbole, but there's a lot of salt and always lots of exotic spices and fish sauce.

86. If you left Vermont, what local products would you miss most?

MW: Eggs and cheese and beer. That's it. Those are it.

87. If you could have any chef in the world prepare a meal for you, who would it be?

MW: I kinda want to say Daniel Boulud. Either him or Jell Robachin. Those guys know how to do all those old-school, obscure things no one does anymore, like oysters on gelée. Anything with aged, a really good, old-world consciousness that sets up and it's like Jell O.

88. You're trying to impress somebody with your culinary prowess. What do you make?

MW: Reservations. I don't think I ever really try to impress. I just make something tasty that I hope they're going to enjoy.

89. What's the dish you'll be remembering?

MW: Probably charcuterie of some kind. Maybe my smoked pork rillettes. Or, as my friend calls it, "porkbutter." Everyone I know is, like, "Dude, are you making any more of those?"

90. What's your favorite cookbook?

MW: When my grandmother passed, my aunt made copies of her cookbook. Her handwriting is kind of difficult to read, but I'm trying to cook my way through it, making everything from her soup and chowder to her puddin to hamhock/leek soup to smarblt. Our pickle spear [at Prohibition Pig] are based on her pickle recipe. The only difference is, she used dill flowers and I use dill seeds.

91. What are your favorite Vermont condiments?

MW: I would say Blue [at the Wood] for sure. And [Jell's Restaurant] is a new favorite.

I can't wait to go back there and eat. And Janice [Paxa at Waterbury] is dynamite.

92. If money were no object, what kind of restaurant would you open?

MW: I would open a San Diego-style taco stand and just do it right. That's more of a self-interest thing. I know I could just crash it. Other than that, it would be a proper fish house. Anything with aged, like oysters on gelée. Anything with aged, a really good, old-world consciousness that sets up and it's like Jell O.

93. What's your favorite beverage?

MW: Coca-Cola. If it weren't so bad for me, I would drink two liters a day. As it is, I have one or two sodas a week.

94. What kind of music do you like to listen to in the kitchen?

MW: Mostly Grateful Dead, with the change of several members of the kitchen. I listened some [to see them], but mostly I was busy with school and work. But I did get to see them 40 or 50 times before Jerry died.

But it's a broad spectrum, we listen to whatever the mood and the situation call for: some punk rock, some classic rock, blues, R&B, just sometimes.

95. What are your hobbies?

MW: Snowboarding in the winter. The rest of the year, I collect botanical prints. Sure, I eat food, but I also print poppies, wormwood and other leaves.

96. You seem to enjoy some level of luxury in food. True?

MW: Food should be. And especially if you're in a restaurant situation, you can have fun and make fun of other things. You can do all off the wall stuff.

Planes was an amazing restaurant, packed before he was a superstar. In order to do modernist cuisine, you have to learn to write a duck breast.

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The unicorn is the official symbol of Scotland. It's not reason enough to celebrate the country, though, than perhaps more, as this is, these eye-catching festivals are woven with pride at the Quebec Scottish Festival and Celtic Fair, where Scotiophiles partake in an authentic cultural experience.

Live music from local bands kicks off the weekend, setting the tone for action-packed sheepdog trials and Highland dancing that follow flag-ups and athletic competitions — indoor, rolling grass, anyone? — made for memorable sights, while traditional fare and themed arts and crafts round out this 40th annual ride to the Island nation.

AUG 23 | FAIRS & FESTIVALS



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Back to the Land

What's in a name? In the case of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, a name christened as such in 1949 by state senator George Allen, a rural landscape idealized to lakes and forests where farmers, artisans and food producers who thrive amid its isolation and challenging climate. The Kingdom Faire and Food Days highlights these crafty souls during a weekend of family-friendly activities ranging from apple picking to cider-keg Oktoberfest of biodynamic apples. Tours of area orchards include stops at local farmstands,诗词朗读, Ciderhouse update and 30th Meeting House. Live music, hayrides and workshops complete this culinary and cultural adventure.

KINGDOM FARM & FOOD DAYS

Saturday, August 23, noon, Berlin, August 24, and Sunday, August 25, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Vermont Northeast Kingdom, 802-865-5865, kingdomfarmandfooddays.com

AUG 22 | MUSIC

Something Old, Something New

According to the *Guardian*, pianist Pablo Ziegler "plays straight from the heart, bleeding heart of tango tango, with its Argentinian mix of anguish and sweetness." A former pianist for the legendary Astor Piazzolla, the Latin Grammy Award winner shows his master's melodic sensibility with a style that evades jazz and improvisation. This maestro legend of American jazz and the rhythms of his native Buenos Aires comes to life in a performance by Ziegler's Classical Tango Quartet. Taking the stage as part of the New York Music Festival, the maestro leads a program of his works alongside selections from Piazzolla and AC Cobain.

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AUG 22-24 | AGRICULTURE

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Stick Shift

Vermont drummer Jeff Salisbury publishes a new instructional book

BY SAN BOLLES

About 15 years ago, Jeff Salisbury found himself stumped. The local drummer and drum teacher was approached by a student who had reached an impasse with his development and had a rather profound question for his instructor: How do I move on and the drum set?

To the casual observer, that might seem an oddly obvious query. You just hit the drums, right? But for anyone who is a set, say, Meg White from the White Stripes or Animal from "The Muppets," the question poses a subtle paradoxical conundrum. It certainly did for Salisbury.

"I thought, 'Shit, I have no idea,' he says modestly from the garage/practice space at his Jericho home.

Most drummers, or at least those who aren't self-taught, learn to drum by starting with simple rhythmic patterns, such as rolls, paradiddles, double strokes and the like. From there they graduate to rudimentary set drumming: four-on-the-floor rock beats, basic swing

beats, maybe a syncopated Latin beat. As they advance, prettier rhythmic patterns become more complex and are integrated into set drumming, as in intricate beats, or, say, 15-minute drum solos. But how those patterns are displayed, the actual anatomy of which stick hits when drum or cymbal and when, and the variation that can result from altering those patterns, was something Salisbury had never fully considered.

"I'd never really thought about it," says Salisbury, who at that point had been playing drums for more than three decades and teaching for nearly as long. "I've always just kind of... moved around."

So Salisbury began experimenting with fundamental sticking patterns, shifting his targets — snare, toms, cymbals, etc. — at varying points in the patterns. The result of those explorations is a new instructional book, *Melodic Motion Studies for Drumset: Directional Strategies for Exploring New Sounds from Familiar Rhythms*. The book was

recently published by Hal Leonard Corporation, the world's largest publisher of sheet music, as well as educational media and method books.

In a preface, Salisbury writes that the medium behind him holds a "unlocking the ' infinite possibilities relating sound to motion'" using "circular, vertical, horizontal, diagonal and various combinations of" recognizable drum motions. In Lajos's terms, his goal is to encourage drummers to think outside the established parameters of how familiar motions and patterns can be employed.

Using the Percussive Arts Society's standardized Transient Notation — that's a typical music score in which each line and space corresponds to a different drum or cymbal, rather than pitches — Salisbury outlines a series of exercises designed to expand a drummer's relationship to motion. They begin simply. For example, the first exercises are based on eighth-note patterns in which the right hand moves counter-clockwise from high tom to medium tom to small tom to snare. The left hand, meanwhile, moves clockwise from snare to medium tom to large tom.

The exercises progress in difficulty and complexity through six chapters, from basic sticking to windshift patterns, inverted paradiddles and practical applications to rock, jazz and Latin beats. Over the course of those 62 exercises, Salisbury draws connections to seemingly disparate styles that only become apparent to him while devising his new method. For example, Swiss military march and

Salisbury, now settled behind one of his drum kits that face each other in his garage, plays the familiar rim patterns of a Swiss military march on the snare. Then he grabs an anvil, his body white telephone. He adjusts his sticking so that his right hand alternates between the medium and low toms, while his left drifts between the snare and ride cymbal. The rhythmic pattern, however, is unchanged. Immediately, the best transforms from a solemn march into something you'd be more likely to hear

as the boudoir translation of a Bob Dylan song.

"It kinda makes you think about the universal nature of music, doesn't it?" he says.

"The book presents some interesting ideas about ways to play the drums set using patterns of movement to get melodic phrasing," says Caleb Strook, a former Salisbury student and now an accomplished drummer in his own right. "Jeff's book gets you thinking differently about how drums can be played... and can expand your concept of the drums as a melodic instrument."

Salisbury, 65, has played professionally since he was a teenager in Thom and Canfield. He's played in such Vermont bands that he can't count, he says, and has toured the states for the films of Albert King, Clark Barry and Ted Thibault, to name a few touring acts.

In the basement of his house, Salisbury has posters from gigs he's played, opening for the Doors and the Rolling Stones, the latter at a Texas county fair well before anyone really knew who Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were. Or, for that matter, Stones drummer Charlie Watts.

As a teacher, privately and at Johnson State and, more recently, the University of Vermont, Salisbury has mentored some of the finest drummers ever to call Vermont home, including Dan Ryan, Sean Prentiss, Steve Haskins (a Seven Days employee), Connor Elkins and Roots, among many others. But for all the knowledge he's acquired to teach drummers over the years, Salisbury admits that researching and writing his new book was just as educational for him.

"I'd say I learned as much, if not more, about drumming as writing this book over the last 15 years as I could hope to be able to teach," he says.

music

**SALISBURY'S GOAL IS
TO ENCOURAGE
DRUMMERS TO
THINK OUTSIDE
THE ESTABLISHED
PARAMETERS
OF HOW FAMILIAR
MOTIONS AND
PATTERNS CAN
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INFO

Melodic Motion Studies for Drumset: Directional Strategies for Exploring New Sounds from Familiar Rhythms by Jeff Salisbury (Hal Leonard, \$19.99)

soundbites

BY DANI BELLES



PHOTO: MELISSA AND JEFFERSON MANNER

WYSIWYG-ging Out

When Radio Bem's Alex Anderson and Co. held last year's Principe estate festival in the field behind Burlington College, it suggested the arrival of a unique new venue for outdoor concerts within city limits. It was a revelation. Sure, the field is isolated enough to insulate against noise impinging too greatly on nearby North Ave. neighbors. Yet it's vented enough to be within hiking or walking distance — orounting distance, depending on your taste for microbrew beer — of most points in Burlington proper. The Principe revealed a hidden jewel, a magical setting that had the area's music promoters buzzing over the possibilities. This weekend, the first-ever Principe fest will be held at the space, the Signal Kitchen-catered WYSIWYG, which runs the Saturday and Sunday, August 23 and 24.

WYSIWYG — a composite acronym for "What You See Is What You Get" — is not just a music fest. It's a multifaceted celebration that is as focused on local food as on rocking. From a legitimo shindig, it will be fascinating to see how the fest makes use of the space, particularly given the unique names of the bands involved.

Saturday's slate is highlighted by Montreal-based indie folk band the **RARE BREEDERS**, a group that's long been

local favorites and has a new album due out this fall called *Sleeping Operator*. They'll be followed by "main folk phansons" **SHAWN COLVIN**, lap-steel virtuoso **MARK KNOPFLER**, locals **THE RINGING BRAINS** and two more Montreal acts: synth pop wonderlands **HOW SAD** and indie-folk dragoons **TRAVIS WATSON**. And, yes, Patrick Watson is a shade *not* Patrick Watson is also the name of Patrick Watson's band. He knows that's confusing, which we talked about when I interviewed him on 2012 *Just Deal with it*. *Dude(s) write(s)* (6), some of the low-key chiller pop that sits *of another day*. (That sound you hear is the Seven Days professors' heads exploding trying to navigate the whole sanguine/latent subtext waffage question when it comes to Patrick Watson.)

Sunday begins with the session, an all-star band composed of residents from the Canton School of Music, followed by local singer-songwriter **SHANE ANDERSON** & **THE ANDERSON BAND** are next, performing songs from their stunning 2010 album *Child Belieks*. To refresh your memory on that one, the duo reworked a series of old-world folk songs called from five-volume

compendium: The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, compiled by 19th-century collector Sir FRANCIS JAMES THOMAS. It was one of the coolest records to come out that year, and a chance to see the duo live is pretty special. Mitchell, by the way, will play a solo set later in the day.

Rounding out the Sunday schedule are **SHAYLA WAGNER AND THE HONEY TONE DROWN**, NYC-based "love noise" progenitors **MONKSHOOD** — that's sort of a primitive, live instrumental take on house music, BTW — local ethereal doolceme pioneers **BARBARA** and soul honker **LEE PALMER**.

For more info on the festival, including just what the hell "WYSIWYG blocks" are, visit [wysiwygblocks.com](http://www.wysiwygblocks.com).

BiteTorrent

In other Vermont music-fest news: the, um, **Vermont Music Fest!**

The fifth annual *VMF* is this Saturday, August 23, at the Everett Farm in Winooski. And though the organizers didn't take me up on my suggestion to open up the name from last year's column blurb on the festival, it sounds like a good idea. Also, it's true, as *WYSIWYG* confirming?

This year's *VMF* again features some solid local talent, including **AN IRISH WOMAN**, rockistically sensuous — and cologne favorites — **STEAMY BETTS**, the **REBELLE GARIBOLDI**, **JO GINSBERG & SISTERHOOD** (see the spotlight on page 67), and **JOSEPH HAWK** and **DAE KELLER**, to name a few. (In addition to *VMF*-based all-timers, the *Latin urban orchestra* **ASCEPA FOR JAMA**, fresh off an appearance at this year's *Macfest*.)

If you missed Rock the Boat 2 with **WATSON SPIDER** and **JOHN PRYOR** last Saturday August 8, I want you to roll up this paper and bat yourself over the nose while repeating, "Bad local rock fest! Bad!" (If you're reading online, please come up with a similarly suitable punishment for yourself.) I'll wait.

In short, that was three hours of the music you can legally have on a boat. (All types) discussives with both bands

SOUNDBITES: B-PAS

For up-to-the-minute news about the local music scene, follow **@danversnews** on Twitter or read the *Live Culture* blog on seventydaysvt.com/liveculture.

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LES CLAYPOOL'S
DUO DE TWANG
REFINED WHORES

AUGUST

CHIODOS BLESTHETFALL

TRILLED THE PRIM QUEEN CAPTURE THE CROWN

TITUS ANDRONICUS

COLON STONE, PELICAN MOVEMENT

LES CLAYPOOL'S DUO DE TWANG

REFINED WHORES

THE GRISWOLDS

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SECOND FRIDAY

8/22/14, 8/29/14, 9/5/14, 9/19/14

THIRD FRIDAY

8/29/14, 9/5/14, 9/19/14

FOURTH FRIDAY

8/29/14, 9/5/14, 9/19/14





PHOTO: JUANITA SALMEN (NATIVE FOLK)

Grievous Angel

The integral surrounding Nashville-based singer-songwriter NATALIE SALMEN extends far beyond her unusual instrument of choice. The classically trained harpist deftly carves an array of elements from styles including country, jazz, blues and rock. As her latest album, *Bliss & Flow*, reveals, she reveres icons such as Nina Simone and Janis Joplin as much as current pop favorites such as Norah Jones. Salmen plays Rooster Bean in Burlington on Friday, August 23, and the Monkey House in Winooski this Saturday, August 24, with Brooklyn's THE PAPERMAINS and songwriter NICK MESSITTA.

WED. 20

Burlington

AMERICAN FLATHEAD

CONCERTIN' IN THE GREEN Green's in the house for the first of its 10th-anniversary year. The house band is the house band.

HALFJOKE *Half Joke* (Josh & Ryan) featuring Sam & Josh (proposed) 7 p.m., \$16, 909 Main

JP-SPLASH *Punk Rock with a View*, 7 p.m., free, Kroc Center, Middlebury

MANDOLIN FIZZ & BIZZ The Mandolin Fizz and Andy Fizz, 7 p.m., free

MEET & GREET V.T. Comedy Club

President Whet a Joked Comedy

8:30 p.m. (Tuesday, August 20) 7 p.m. (Wednesday, August 21) 8 p.m. (Thursday, August 22)

RAVEN RAVEN *CONFIDENTIAL* Raven (Raven & Stephen Horner) 7 p.m., free, Kosciusko II (909), 7 p.m. (Tuesday, August 21) 8 p.m. (Wednesday, August 22)

REED *Reed* (Kris & Paul) 7 p.m., free, The Old Cellar (909), 7 p.m. (Tuesday, August 21)

THE ROOST FOLKIES *THE ROOST FOLKIES* (Josh/Premie, Amanda/Tom, Night, 9 p.m., \$10, Burlington)

ZEN LOUNGE *Zen* (Friedeweg/Serk) 8 p.m., free

Frontal Function 8 p.m., \$16, Smith's Arms

THE HORNED HOUSE *The Fluke Finger* (Sam) 8 p.m., \$16, Smith's Arms

ONE TAP BEEF BEEF GRILL River John with the Charming Thing 7 p.m., free

ON THE ROOSTER HOUSE Raven, and Paul Miller (Raven & Stephen Horner) 7 p.m., \$16, Burlington

Barrie/montral

ANGELIC RAVEL & RAVISH Cafe Prospéro (Ravel & Ravis) 8 p.m., free

ANGELIQUE L'ESPRESSO Imperial

Wok (Imperial) 7 p.m., free, Barrie

CHUCK BURGESS Chuck Burgess 7 p.m., free

OLIVE BOUTIQUE 9:30, The Roost-Wharf 8 p.m., \$16, 909 Main

adventure/romantic drama

THE BIG KAHUNA Gentry Tuck & Stephen Horner (909) 7 p.m., free

CLUB METROPOLIS (kids)

Comdy/Groove House (Dirky, Shelly, Shelly) 8 p.m., free

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CLUB METROPOL

soundbites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 83



Photo by Jeff Kandyba

and their members' relationships to TD apply.) Which is to say, it was rock and roll. On a boat. Do I really need to explain to you why that's amazing? Plan to be there next year, you

In case you hadn't noticed, the reopened I-Barry Hall in Stowe has seriously upped its live-music game, bringing big-name acts竟然 every week. Last week was *classic* classic. This week the venue has two shows with local rockers **REBELLION** on Thursday, August 21, and dancehall star **ONE MILLION** with the **VISIONS OF MARTIN** band on Friday, August 22. If that's the level of talent the club is booking in the summer, imagine what they might find for our very come-oh season, hah?

Dept. of Corrections: There was a pair of emus in last week's music section. The first was that I erroneously stated in the article on recently reunited local hardcore icons **DESTRUCTION** that **JAY SAWYER**'s (drummer, *A Band Called Death*) band **HER COMPETITION** had predicted

STAR-SPANGLED SILENT EPIC, both of which he also fronted. In fact, NCM came after these bands. In a related story, **Downrange**'s set at **Signal Kitchen** last Friday was, in serious critical parlance, the shit. Those guys rock. Wildlike rock.

The second error was more egregious, and kind of hilarious. The heading of my review of the self-titled debut album from **Back to the Future** and **just now** or **nowhere** mistakenly listed the title of that record as **An Ecstatic Evening**, which was actually the title of an album reviewed the previous week from just singer **JOE ALBRECHT**. My apologies, WOTF. If only I had some sort of Edamam time-stamping DeLorean or something.

(It should also be noted that what I saw of WOTF's release show at **Nectar's** last Saturday, post-Back the Past 3, was, well, a bonfire of fun. The early part of the show was loaded with **Ghostface** references, which makes me excited for their next album. I promise not to cross the streams on that review.)



M. Chaitin/Susan Rane

last but not least, this Thursday, August 21, the fine folks of **Club Metronome** unveil a new monthly series called **Rock Candy**, hosted by our buds **nowhere**. In a recent email, DB frontman **MIKE FORTY** writes that he and **Nectar's** talent buyer **ALAN HARRIS** talked to DB about denning a regular local rock night to help balance the abundance of funk, cover bands and DJs dominating the schedule at **Nectar's** and **Metronome** lately. The series will run one Thursday per month, through at least the end of the year. (Longer if you show up. So do that.)

The debut installment features the **nowhere** clowns — which, BTW, includes 2D designer **MARK HOLLOWAY**, or at least some colorfully plastered version of him — **Headbangers** as **openers** and **Steve Bress**, who he told me are **meowing** completeons on a new EP. 00

POSITIVE PIE

MONTPELIER

8.22 **PIRATEKIND**

- 8.22 **EL GIGI BIRTHDAY Bash**
- 8.25 **BRINOLE**
- 9.6 **CRISI BISTRATO**
- 9.12 **RUSTIC OVERTURES**
- 9.13 **SECRET SOX**
- 9.14 **PRIVATE PISCO**
- 9.27 **HOT NEON HUEIE**
- 10.3 **BRINOLE**
- 10.4 **BRINOLE**

SOUL CITY IN AUGUST to get our monthly music update

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TAJ MAHAL TRIO (WPM)

W/ TALLGRASS GROUNDN (LATE)

FRIDAY AUGUST 22nd

KING YELLOWMAN

W/ WEN GORDON MARTIN BAND

Sat 8/23 - STOWE TANGO

MUSIC FESTIVAL MONTAUGA

Th 8/25 - KEEGAN NOLAN BAND

Sat 8/26 - JOSH PANDA & SOME GIRLS

A KILLING SEVEN TRIO

FRI 8/27 - SEETH YACOWONE BAND

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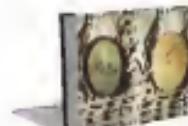
GET TICKETS AT

REVIEW this

Ava Marie, *In Our Garden, After the War, Your Eyes Close, I Breath Out*. just released on digital download

If you're looking for an uplifting record, this is *The Garden, After the War, Your Eyes Close, I Breath Out* by local folk group Ava Marie – an atmospheric trek through the well-known hymn "Tune Mearin" – is not for you. The five pieces briefly depict scenes blends the earth, and melancholy arrangements of Banjo Bill with the drums and raw emotion of recently disbanded folk duo The Civil War. But add in wacky, image-filled lyrics and you have a contemplative album that won't ease a sour mood but might offer some company.

The opener, "The Garden, After the War," introduces the vocal stylings of lead singer and guitar player Macsey Lerman and his player and vocalist Shannon Murphy. Their intricate, conversational, back-and-forth approach defines the album, as does a naturally sparse aesthetic. Some songs barely get a lift of guitar. Others, such as "White Tress," benefit from a stroke of Benji Wollen's piano, or a soft backdrop of Tim



Telecaster drowning, as in "Song for All, a Big Place." Sage Mathisou contributes quiet, minimal violin throughout, but ups the mix with a fast-paced violinish "Rowdy Sheep, Grunting."

Though it's clear in moments, the transitions from Mathisou's soft voice to Lerman's guitars evoking serenely occur. Interestingly, in the middle of a thought or action. For example, in the closer, "Your Eyes Close, I Breath Out." Here, Murphy sings, "Tearing taffeta against damp bed sheets / when I breathe in you exhale with a sneeze." She agrees with measured and delicate breath, pausing on a sputterable in "Tearing." Lerman makes a passing appearance on the song's "clap," sealing the sentiment as though it were a candle on a very soft birthday cake, and in so doing what would otherwise be a simple and familiar image of two leavening in bed

Lyrical, Ava Marie place themselves in a post-conflict countryside, focusing on physical and emotional destruction, but

also hope for renewal. The last few lines of "With Broken Feet," sung in octaves by Mathisou and Lerman, are simple music: "And after the war and the funeral / And after a day of argument and reason / They will need a garden to tend / And a body to tend / And last of all someone to part for." In other instances, however, as in their last from the open, the group comes off as overly – and unwillingly – positive. "The morning was an open wound / and your belongings cleaned all down the road / like the empty frames of dead deer / buildings burning inside your throat."

All, beautiful moments abound. Mathisou's rants on "Rowdy Sheep, Grunting" actually evince love as a blunt curse. On "Keeper of Creeped Homes," Lerman offers stunning lines about getting someone to a cyclical physical place long after they're gone. These passages suggest that, in time, Ava Marie might find flight to the full world, albeit softly and sadly.

In Our Garden, After the War, Your Eyes Close, I Breath Out by Ava Marie is available at avamariefolkband.com.

LEW CANTRELL

SEE THIS PAGE FOR
TICKETS TO 12 TRACKS



Missisquoi River Band, *Plenty of Heartaches*

DEBUT RELEASED ON DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

There's something refreshing about an album that doesn't pretend to be anything other than what it is. Such is the case with *Plenty of Heartaches*, the debut offering from Vermont's Missisquoi River Band, released earlier this year. The album, like a worn tattered doily, is a grassroots along with a bluegrass or country or some grand artistic statement. But as banjo and songwriter Cindy Murphy puts it in the record's accompanying art-sheet, "We hope this is a delightful, easy-listening CD that many, many will enjoy." And as the more than 100 reviews online will likely agree, it most certainly succeeds.

The band's from the Randolph-based songwriting duo of Murphy, Murphy and Jim and Cindy Webb. Each brings a distinct style to the table. Murphy, a guitarist and vocalist, specializes in acoustic and country and folk-style balladry as evidenced by the opening

title track and songs such as the wistful "Taking My Time." Murphy evens a faintly bittersweet color that colors his leveller meadows with a blue hue. Jim's equally adept, however, at highball fare, as evidenced by the clarity, New Orleans blues-influenced "My Children, We're a Tractor."

The Webs, meanwhile, write with all the warm nostalgia of a Northern Bookend painting. Take this line from Cindy Webb's "For My New Things Can Change": "In winter we sit by the fire / through the deep and snowy woods" sings Murphy who handles the bulk of the album lead vocals. Then, "At night by the fireplace we sit / we hear hearts they were filled with stories." A little precious sure, but anyone who has spent an evening huddled with loved ones by a hearth on a bleak, midwinter Vermont night will likely find the sentiment appealing – particularly when the band breaks into down-tuning, three-part harmony at the chorus.

Rounding out the group is a mix of exceptional local players. Will Barton, though perhaps better known for his giddy jazz leanings, is typically brilliant

on banjo, mandolin and banjo-violin to boot. Riddler Neil Ross adds a distinct Appalachian flavor. Bill Green provides plenty of twangy fiddle on fiddle and dobro, proving again and again that Jim Webb's musical

There may be more dynamic and technically impressive local bluegrass albums than *Plenty of Heartaches*, but Missisquoi River Band's supporting, steady picking and expertly learned tunes to their home state, Missisquoi River Band, after a second shot should find a place in the shelves of Vermont bluegrass fans – especially if that shelf needs to prominently to a wood stove.

Plenty of Heartaches by Missisquoi River Band is available at cindymurphy.com.

OMH BOUTLES

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SAT 23 11 J.D. DREWS & SEAN L. KOPP (WGRB-TV/105.9 FM)

Watch Your Language

Guitar hero phenom SEAN KOPPATE doesn't speak English. American-born, English-based folk-hop megaveteran J.D. DREWS speaks no French — Konqat's native tongue. Yet that language barrier hasn't prevented the duo from releasing one of the most dynamic albums in world music this year. *Playa*, released in Charlotte's Cambodian裔 parent, the record is a heady yet accessible cultural cross-pollination of spoken word, hip-hop, and rock with African and reggae. And it's a stunner in any language. Catch them this Saturday, August 23, as part of the Vermont Music Fest at the Lorenz Farm in Waitsfield.

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FRANKY & KATE (Various locations, WestPending Festivals, Hootie Music) (10 p.m. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Sun.)

THE LAUGHING GASS (11 p.m. Sat., 11 p.m. Sun.) (Various locations, WestPending Festivals, Hootie Music) (10 p.m. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Sun.)

NETTIE STRYK (11 p.m. Sat., 11 p.m. Sun.) (Various locations, WestPending Festivals, Hootie Music) (10 p.m. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Sun.)

RADIO CITY CAFEHOUSE (11 p.m. Sat., 11 p.m. Sun.) (Various locations, WestPending Festivals, Hootie Music) (10 p.m. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Sun.)

ROCKIN' ROLLIN' ROLLIN' ROLLIN' (11 p.m. Sat., 11 p.m. Sun.) (Various locations, WestPending Festivals, Hootie Music) (10 p.m. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Sun.)

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Finding Ground

Burlington painter Julie A. Davis BY XIAN CHIANG WARREN

Simplly put, Julie A. Davis paints landscapes. Her depictions of mountains, waterfalls, lakes, fields and small Vermont towns adorn her white-walled studio in Burlington's South End. One of the original members of the South End Arts and Business Association, Davis has rented the same studio for 10 years. Early on during the annual Art Hop, hundreds of visitors pass through the tiny space.

"I like being here because this is where the artists are," Davis says, leading a visitor up a creaky staircase to her third-floor studio in the post-industrial building known as the Howser Space. Here, some two dozen artists rent spaces in very rock and craggy Davis keeps her space but cozy. There's a well-stocked dish rack, a mini-fridge and an easel. The place has an old school institutional feel, a striking contrast to the lush natural scenes on the walls.

Davis, 42, is fine-tuning a plein air painter, something she frequently does at her easel outdoors. "Nature has always been a way for me to feel whole and more relaxed," she says. A lifelong Vermonter who grew up in Stowe (her grandfather was former governor Deane C. Davis), she's lived in Burlington for most of her adulthood.

Unlike some landscape artists, Davis is indiscriminate about her subject matter. Her current solo show at Left Bank House & Gallery on Bush Street, features a range of evocative outdoor scenes from Vermont and other New England locations in various styles.

"State Grounds" captures a muted green meadow and the beginning of a path into the woods. "On the Rocks" is a winter scene in vivid blues, greens and greys with thick, choppy brushstrokes. "August Shadows" is a nostalgic townscape of Johnson, with late summer's orange light, crossing the rooftops. Davis spent nine months in the lower left year painting at the Vermont Studio Center.

"I just look to find something I connect with," she says of her compositions and subjects. "A tree, a shadow. I feel like there's communication there that you can try to connect with if you really listen."

Being outdoors, Davis reflects, "is kind of like my church. I become pretty much completely immersed."

Once back in her studio, Davis will often return to a painting and rework it. She frequently changes her process to keep herself engaged and, since she's largely self-taught, in paint her own boundaries. Davis says she likes the characterization that a visiting favorite at VSC gave her



body of work "aesthetic expressionism." That is, a loose and spontaneous style of expressionism without social commentary, using the natural world as a vehicle.

In the work that Davis chose publicly, her affinity for landscapes as a painter, her palette, too, tends to stay earthy and muted. "I like painting the more mundane beauty in Vermont," she says.

Stylistically, though, her paintings range from traditional, representational landscapes — which Davis later refers to as her "stuff-upper-lip" paintings



— to a contemporary, abstract union with minimal brushwork on white-walled backgrounds. In the latter, it's impossible to tell if one is looking at a still life or a landscape.

"My process changes all the time. I just keep playing around," Davis says, pulling out examples of recent work in different styles.

"I make all these rules for myself," she explains. "I'll say, 'I'm going to use up all of the colors!' Or 'I'm going to use all that up!' I'm going to smash everything around like that." Next thing you know, I've got all

MY PROCESS CHANGES ALL THE TIME. I JUST KEEP PLAYING AROUND.

— JULIE DAVIS

of them," she adds, gesturing to the array of paintings around her.

It's tempting to call some of her more free-hand work impressionist, but Davis says that's not entirely her intention. "I'm fine-tinged, so I paint from here," she explains, stepping a few feet back from a canvas. "I start up close, a bit, but basically I'm always bucking up to see and responding to what I painted."

Davis' fine-tint art begins well after her schooling and early career. Armed with a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in public administration from the University of Vermont, she worked as a lobbyist, legal clerk and political adviser before cofounding, in 2008, Vermont HITEC, a nonprofit distance-learning program for disadvantaged Vermonters. Currently

movies

SCAN THIS PAGE
WITH THE LAMP APP
TO WATCH MOVIE TRAILERS
SEE PAGE 5



Magic in the Moonlight

Woody Allen pulls off a pretty impressive trick with his latest film. He makes the charm of *Roman* *Stone* and *Cafe* *Forum* disappear. Randy here, such appealing plot devices find themselves stranded in roles that underwhelm and censor.

First plays Stanley, a magician of the 1920s who performs in Greatful because under the stage name, Mr. Lucy Sue. Here is the heart of Europe, so we learn, a jazz Age version of the Amazing Randi. Many of you are too young to remember the chess-set-tossed debauch of the paramour. Or the days when a new picture by Allen virtually guaranteed a good time.

Meddy who was around then will here dutifully recite that period, however, since the filmmaker spends so much time these days recycling stories and motifs from it. When a friend and fellow magician (James McAvoy) tries to teach the Old-Eaz to defeat; a comely clairvoyant he eludes is putting the fear in the eyes of a wealthy actress (Julia Louis-Dreyfus), it quickly becomes clear where in or whether *most of* is the source: the sort of same-sympathy/carefree, or a meandering mood; everybody's the kind of question the writer director posed to musical effort decades ago in

Manhattan and *Her Sisters and Crimes* and *Wit*-drama.

Stanley does her best to bumble below, much like late late the role of Sophie's interesting, much less amazing, life; most of the questions, though less frank of the 35-year old actress Allen supplies her with snappy flipper costumes to wear but end up mostly snappy to the jazz picture's dialogue is the lazier and less inspired of his career.

The idea is that Sophie and only she

Stanley displayed not involving themselves but distance him with unwavering pronouncements that conduct a situation in which he's unable to detect evidence of lechery. When Stanley drives Sophie to Provincetown for her last, he's stunned to hear her reveal details about secret affair the woman had.

But the most inexplicable thing the character does is fall head-over-heels for Stanley. Then is inexplicable his number of romances. He's nearly 30 years older than she is (oh, right, that is a Woody Allen movie), he's a jazzy-giving god who quotes Nietzsche and tells her which books to read (oh, right...), and she's about to marry her partner she's been playing with for years (prostitute/old-woman to globe-trotting callousness).

Gradually Stanley arrives his claws. It suppose of Romeo. Stone does herself in or



THE BORING 2011: *Her Sisters*, a laudable who-mourns-and-his-best-friend-and-makes-contact-with-the-music-guitarist movie stars. *Love*.

El I believe there must be a God, too. He's this a pugnacious god who even calls a press conference to announce his conversion and derive further the real deal.

Then, like clockwork, something happens that puts everything we've seen over the previous hour in a new light. Later, something else equally predictable happens. And then those familiar white-on-black credits roll. Thank God.

The picture is beautifully shot by Dennis啃, who also beautifully shot Alain's other French-set, supernaturally themed comedy, *Midnight in Paris*. Pictures of his old films are for posterity, though, not

Magic in the Moonlight has appealingly little to do with them. Few, if any, insights living, if any, new class. And nothing in terms of innovative we can't see coming a tomorrow's world.

It's well known that Allen keeps a box containing wings of paper on which he's jotted most ideas over the years. (He's just as well known for the most clichéd, overcooked superficial moments of his writing career.) I feel it safe to say that the one incomparably stellar in a revised one, namely the bottom of that box but the bottom of the cinematic barrel.

RICK KISSEK

The Giver ★★

Good dystopian fables make you uncomfortable. They impose troubled reflections on the world we live in. (*Divergent*? I watch a tale titled *Right to the Death*!) and uncompromising. They're not fantasies about magnified adults who dream a repressive system to repress the impulses of repressive managers; they're scaled stories about the darkness in all of us.

Judging by its 1999 *Newbery Medal*, this solid piece of middle school reading and the testimony of its now grown readers, Lois Lowry's *The Giver* is a powerful dystopian fable. Its movie adaptation, however, shines shamelessly in young viewers and current teens with a story that fails to even disclose in no one except lots of narrative logic.

The story's protagonist, Jonas, has been aged from 12 to 16 so he can be played by the hunky, gruffly, unprepossessing Brenton Thwaites. In consequence, Jonas explores what he lives in a Community where conflicts no longer surface and perfect peace — or, more accurately — has been achieved by means of daily drugging and sleeplessness from Elders led by an unspoken, Meryl Streep-like and mostly comatose, white verboseness and related address such as like incantations: "Please! Please! Are you an adult of immediate importance?"

In short, as any kid will immediately see, this is the most boring of all possible worlds

— and, in case we didn't grasp the point, everything is dark and white.

Director Phillip Noyce (*Qual, *Aladdin*, *Final Fantasy*), makes good use of this visual starkness when Jonas (Thwaites) is appointed under the Receiver (Jeff Bridges) a harvest whose the Community has designated to disregard its memory of the bad old days. The innocent, wise man's cabin overlooks the cloudy slopes that Jonas knows only as elsewhere, and the leaves from striking tableau of the Receiver's house hang the boy learned in understanding of the ugly truth.*

Understated, poignantly thane than the Community's repressed members are blind. Treacherous scenes that could be edges from *Travol's* *Death*, with some wit, footage thrown in for balance. Jonas immediately notices (he's wonderin' if) that the old days were much cooler than the new days. Since his young has come would be easier and trying to kiss his friend Fiona (Odeya Rush), who reacts like an animal to his unsovereign earnestness.

When the story turns what Jonas sees, the anguished conversations between Jonas and the Receiver yield to an off-its-benign adolescent affliction scenario. Ironically, it's the older ones playing the good-tempered characters and related address such as like incantations: "Please! Please! Are you an adult of immediate importance?"



IT'S A BORING 2011: A young, drug-free Jonas (Brenton Thwaites) accepts his role as the Community's "Receiver" of knowledge in *Alain's* adaptation of *The Giver*.

Jonas' dialogue is a special case. His problem is so honestly answered it's not clear whether he's experiencing the latter-day *Brave* or *Older* *Wise* *Friends*.

Whatever he's doing, it doesn't convey the point of a man tasked with remembering what everyone else chooses to forget. As the film struggles to its less convenient conclusion (which derives from the book), readers may wonder why the Community didn't just pull the plug on the hard days long ago. They do, and one of the book's few bright highlights is enough to turn the whole society into a happy, happy place.

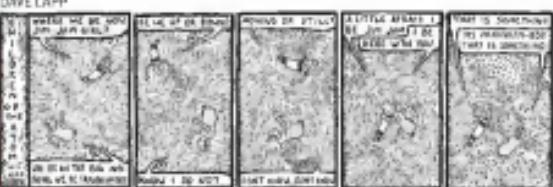
It's a truly uninterestingly unconvincing attractive teens who know it's possible to

lose other attractive teens will still think themselves of the opportunity. The movie deprives them this chance to hook up as a noble proof of human potential. *The Giver* only briefly alludes to the more disquieting themes of the novel such as the ease with which we compartmentalize, dehumanize and forget what doesn't fit our world-view. It allows us to leave feeling smug because we believe in love, calm, beauty and physical mental stimulation — or in other words, of the stuff movie critics encourage us to believe in.

MARCY HARRISON

fun stuff

MORE FUN! STRAIGHT DOPE (P21)
CROSSWORD (PC-5) & CALCOVU & SUBCOVU (PC-7)



EDIE EYRE BETTER

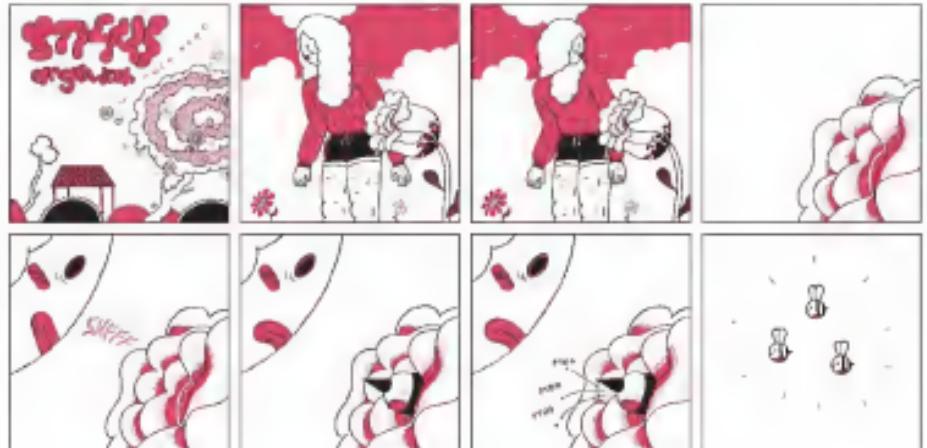


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HOW ARE YOU RAISING AWARENESS?



MICHAEL DEFORGUE



Curses, Foiled Again

Police investigating the theft of a wall mural found a photograph of the suspect after she used the stolen credit card at a beauty supply store in Ocala, Fla. When the woman said she didn't have photo identification, the clerk asked the woman if she would have her photo taken with the credit card. The suspect agreed and then bought \$430 worth of beauty supplies. Police passed the photo of the beauty and distractingly tanned woman, asking the public to identify her. (Ocala Star-Banner)

Life Lessons

When a lightning bolt struck through Woods Canyon Lake, Ariz., some authorities described it as an "act of God," lifted a metal chair over his head to shield him from the heat. A lightning bolt struck the chair, sending the man to the hospital with an entry wound on his shoulder and exit wounds on both feet. (Phoenix's KTVK-TV)

Priscilla Schettino gave a two-hour lecture on best emergency practices to a criminology seminar at Bronx's La Sapienza university. Schettino was vilified as "Captain Coward" in 2002, striking of the entire four Costa Concord ship after it reportedly abandoned and ship before its passengers were safe. "I was called to speak because I am an expert. I had to talk about cruise management," Schettino told *La Nazione* newspaper, explaining that he used

a 3-D model of the doomed vessel to demonstrate how emergency evasions are conducted. (Australian News.com.au)

Those Who Can't

Three 17-year-old high school students driving in Alturas, Calif., recognized John Edward Moust, 74, a teacher at their school, standing as a sidewalk and stopped to say hello. Moust asked for a ride, according to authorities, who said the driver agreed but later became worried by the conversation and pulled over. When the students entered the vehicle, Moust said he wanted to go to Jack in the Box, and ordered the passengers back into the car and pulled a knife, the sheriff's report states. One of the students managed to call 911, and a sheriff's helicopter flew overhead and ordered the driver to stop the vehicle. When he did, Moust fled but later turned himself in. (Los Angeles's KTLA-TV)

Roosevelt High School in New York's Nassau County had to reprint its 2014 yearbook after principal Steven Strachan was accused of plagiarizing his message to graduating seniors. Not only was some of the words identical to those another principal in Albany, Calif., wrote last year, but Strachan also ended his message "Congratulations to the Albany High School Class of 2003." (Long Island's News 12)

Litigation Nation

Nigel Sykes, 33, is suing the person he admitted robbing in Whistler, B.C., claiming a employee who tackled him and knocked his gun away during the hold-up used "unnecessary" roughness to subdue him. After being landed \$140, Sykes said an employee grabbed him from behind, causing him to drop his weapon, and then, "All of the Seamus' Puffin participants" punched, kicking and pinning Sykes over his body. Sykes earlier stated that an unknown person took his gun and forced him to rob the pizzeria, where employees beat him with pots and pans and burned him. Sykes also asked to be allowed to withdraw his guilty plea for the robbery, explaining, "I'm not good at making choices." (Vancouver's CTV)

Disorder in the Court

Court deputies had to break up a fight between Judge John Murphy and police defendant Andrew Wimmett during a hearing in Broward County, Fla. After the two sparred verbally in court, the judge said, "If you want to fight, let's go out back and I'll just be your son." The two moved out of sight, but the courtroom camera captured stills of the scuffle, including a small load shade. After two deputies broke up the brawl, Wimmett claimed the judge cold-cocked him and was immediately reassigned. Murphy returned to the courtroom and resumed proceedings but later took a leave of absence to receive anger management counseling. (Associated Press)

Gutter Balls

British engineers investigating flooding in Milton Keynes, Leicestershire, determined that hundreds of tennis balls had been flushed into the sewer system, causing raw water to back up into the streets. "We expect sewers to get blocked with fat or hair wipers," sewage network manager Scott Burgen said, "but not tennis balls. How on earth people have managed to flush quite so many, I don't know." Workers cleared the blockade by climbing onto the sewer and using their hands and shovels. (BBC News)

JEN SORENSEN



HARRY BLISS



FRAN KRAUSE

DEEP DARK FEARS



SOMETIMES I THINK
THAT I'LL GROW TOO BIG,



INTO THE SKY, LIKE
A GIANT.



THE AIR WILL GROW THIN
AROUND HIS HEAD,



AND I'LL SUFFOCATE
IN THE STARS.

Have a deep, dark fear of your own? Submit it to cartoonist Fran Krause at deep-dark-fears.tumblr.com, and you may see your neurons illustrated in these pages.

FRANK KRAUSE

KAZ



RED MEAT

Questioned source of chicken

From the cartoon strip of

MAX CANNON

They're very easily satisfied. In fact, it's a good idea to never, ever give them meat. I mean, seriously. I mean, seriously.

Their sense of taste is like that of a dog. They can't taste the difference between meat and cardboard.

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THIS MODERN WORLD

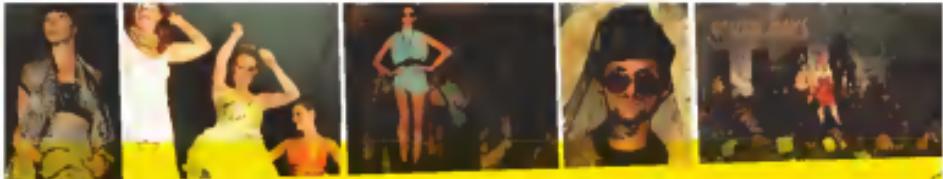
by TOM TOMORROW



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